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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains seminar papers concerning educational policy issues presented in Nebraska from 1972-1978. In the papers, recognized educational experts in the state react to substantive issues and follow up with a current status report. The issues discussed include networking to develop policy, accountability, federal involvement, educational service units, roles and functions of the state department and the state board, collective bargaining, competency-based education, community education, governance of postsecondary education, determining educational policy, and the need for an educational policy commission in Nebraska. (Author/LD)

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EDUCATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT FOR NEBRASKA

An Examination of Critical Issues

by

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PREFACE

This monograph contains presentations made at Nebraska Education Seminars from 1972 to 1978. The Seminar papers considered selected education policy issues facing Nebraskans. After each Seminar paper, a brief description of the "Current Status" of the Seminar topic is given. Also, recognized experts in the State of Nebraska reacted to the substantive issues in the Seminar papers. The analysts provide stimulating and provocative observations on each Seminar topic. This final procedure is a critical step to monitor the development of key education policy issues as they are dealt with in The Associates Program in the United States.

Dr. Phillip Kearney, Director of The Associates Program, provided us with the encouragement to develop the monograph and secured the funding from The Associates Program for the publication.

We are especially indebted to William Hughes, a doctoral candidate in the Dual Degree Program for Law and Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, for his contributions. Mr. Hughes wrote the excellent descriptions of "Current Status" for each Seminar topic. The reader will find these statements of great value in interpreting both the Seminar papers and the analyses.

Dr. Dale K. Hayes, Director of the Nebraska Education Seminars, has provided outstanding leadership for the Seminars and his efforts over the years have served as the basis for this monograph. In the "Introduction" Dr. Hayes also offers additional insights into the policy issues in this monograph.

We are also indebted to Mrs. Luise Berner who typed the manuscript. Mrs. Berner's contributions far exceeded that of a typist as she also made valuable suggestions and gently kept us to the task.

Dr. Brandon Whistler, Coordinator of the Instructional Design Center of Teachers College, UN-L, designed the cover.

Last, we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the Seminar participants and those who provided the analyses and observations on the Seminar papers.

The opinions expressed in this monograph do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute for Educational Leadership or of The Associates Program.

We dedicate this monograph to all persons interested in the development of education policy in Nebraska.

Thomas C. Henry Frederick C. Wendel

INTRODUCTION

Some five years ago, Nebraska was invited to join the brief list of states which were to inaugurate state versions of the already successful Education Staff Seminar in Washington, D.C. Both the Education Staff Seminar (ESS) and The new Associates Program (TAP) network were given their impetus through the Institute for Educational Leadership of George Washington University and the Ford Foundation. The mission of both ESS and TAP was and is to provide policymakers and/or influential persons with current information and opinion about existing, changing, or needed education policy at the national and state levels. The success of ESS generated the idea that similar activities at the state level could also aid our great education enterprise. So, TAP began--and the Nebraska Education Seminar (NES).

NES has been an activity of increasing significance. Initially some perceived it as just one more group trying to deal with matters already taken care of. Others thought it to be an "establishment" enterprise bent on some specific but unfathomable goal. A few envisioned it as a needed forum where leaders from a variety of fields could "let their hair down" and share concerns and aspirations. This latter view was embraced by the Planning Committee and the other views have faded.

Topics and speakers chosen have been opportune. They have dealt with policy issues that are either urgent or emerging. In no instance has either the topic or the speaker been evaluated negatively in the anonymous evaluations completed at the end of each session. To the contrary, the evaluations have been amazingly positive. The continued attendance of busy senators, government officials, educators, and other state leaders is probably the best testimony to the virility of the sessions. It appears that each succeeding session was livelier than the last in terms of open, honest, and penetrating interchange between participants. Thus, if successful seminars depend upon such interchange, the sessions showed continuous improvement.

This monograph presents a glimpse at some of the significant seminars. Others have been equally important for education policy in Nebraska. As finances get tighter, tempers shorter and societal problems more complex, the role of NES might become more significant. It can serve as a source of information and sample of divergent views on issues of which command the allegiance of competing interests. Outside of government or any other bureaucracy NES can look openly and aggressively at any issue which has a bearing on education policy in Nebraska.

We have seen in recent years a shift of power from local to state to federal levels. Now it appears that that direction is about to reverse--at least to the state level. If that is true, Nebraska and other states must

clarify and develop state education policies. These policies need to deal clearly with a whole range of issues which essentially they haven't. Included in these issues are not only finance, but articulation between schools, goals of the education enterprise, and definitive divisions of labor between and among the many education agencies. Unless and until many of these issues are raised to a state policy level, we will hardly be ready to conduct an education system as effectively as is needed. Education is legally a state function, and we'd better gear our efforts to perform that function effectively.

Since its inception NES has been blessed with the support and efforts of several key Nebraskans. If the seminar has been as successful as I feel it has, much credit goes to them. This manuscript would be incomplete without our expression of sincere thanks to the following persons who have served on the Planning Committee for NES. They have counseled me, chosen topics for the meetings and most important, taken time from demanding schedules to attend nearly all of the seminars over a span of almost six years. To these persons go my special compliments:

Dr. M. Anne Campbell, Commissioner of Education (1975-78)
Dr. Bernard Gyger, Government Liaison, Omaha Public Schools (1972-77)
Tom Larsen, President, Lincoln Equipment Company (1978)
Senator Frank Lewis, Bellevue (1975-78)
Norman Otto, Executive Assistant to the Governor (1972-78)
John Prasch, Superintendent, Lincoln Public Schools (1976-78)
Robert Raun, Regent, University of Nebraska (1972-77)
Cecil Stanley, Commissioner of Education (1972-75)
Senator Jerome Warner, Waverly (1972-78)

Since I believe that effective education is the mainspring to improved living for a people, the opportunity to engage in dialogue such as is available through the NES is essential. The activities and evaluation of the Nebraska Education Seminar are such that this opportunity is provided. Together, we have made progress--in our understanding of issues, our acceptance of each other, and our common recognition of each other's needs and problems.

Dale K. Hayes

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NETWORKING IN THE STATES TO DEVELOP EDUCATION POLICY

Formulating education policy involves a complex array of decision-makers--educators, laymen, and governmental officials. For example, some 20,000 governing boards operate at the public school level and in institutions of postsecondary education. Educational and political decision-makers, as they proceed with the development of education policy, must relate in some manner, not only with representatives of these boards, but with numerous county, state, and federal officials. As the complexities of relationships among officials responsible for carrying out education policy increases, the demand for leadership in the identification and framing of cogent education policy becomes even more pervasive. A program which has been designed to improve the process of the identification and framing of education policy is The Associates Program (TAP), a component of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) at George Washington University.

The Associates Program (TAP)

The Associates Program (TAP) was organized with the recognition that state legislatures have almost complete power over public education, except where there are specific restrictions in state constitutions. Founded in 1971, the first Associates Program, entitled "Institute Associates," was composed of selected faculty and administrative staff members of institutions of higher education and staff members of other community organizations which could provide influential input into state education policy development decisions. Associates were to serve as technical advisors in education policy development with congressional legislative committees, executive agencies, commissions and councils, state boards of education, and appropriate non-governmental entities for the primary purpose of providing direct and immediate expertise to the education policy formulation process.

In early 1972, the program evolved from "Institute Associates" to what is now known as The Associates Program. In 1972 three state educational seminars were sponsored by TAP. The Associates Program now sponsors seminars in twenty-seven states, all directed by Associates who, on a part-time basis, arrange some five programs in each of their states annually.

TAP: A Policymaking Network

At the outset, TAP was conceived to be a process-oriented approach to the identification of education policy and to act as a catalyst toward the realization of improved decisionmaking in the education policy arena. TAP is committed to the promotion of interstate and regional communication and to mitigation of intrastate parochialism. It seeks to provide information-hungry state influentials some exposure to the top thinkers in major education policy areas. And finally, TAP seeks to sponsor high-quality seminars which provide a statewide perspective on salient education policy issues.

The TAP model varies among the twenty-seven states, but in each of the states, a TAP associate is selected to guide the work of TAP to the extent that it appears necessary for the benefit of the state. TAP Associates are selected by the IEL using the following criteria:

Ability to identify and develop existing and potential resource people who can bring knowledge, information, and analysis to the policy process at the state level.

Ability to develop the linkages needed between these resource people and policymakers at the state level.

Ability to help federal level policymakers and staff understand state level processes, political cultures and quality of resources.

Ability to develop commitment on the part of state decisionmakers to the continued use of such informed resource people (e.g., through development of permanent staff or policy analyst roles).

As one of the communication links in the levels of political authority in education, TAP takes a modest but pragmatic approach toward improvement of education policymaking. TAP focuses on major problems faced by education policymakers at the state level.

EDUCATION POLICY IN NEBRASKA

The development of sound education policy for the State of Nebraska has perhaps assumed greater importance in the 1970's than in any past decade. Runaway double-digit inflation, coupled with oversupplies of trained educators and demands for accountability in education, have placed stress-producing and foreboding constraints upon those responsible for providing direction to the educational establishment. Ramifications of education policy have become the focus of attention as Nebraskans seek to identify and effectively resolve issues critical to public education.

Because education policy in Nebraska emanates from political, social, economic, and educational currents, the processes inherent to the development of education policy in the state are diffuse and sometimes amorphous. It is essential that mechanisms be made available to facilitate the

identification and framing of germane policy. These mechanisms can allow for a clearer understanding of the policy alternatives available to the various groups responsible for formulating policy.

In an effort to improve the process of education policy development and to provide a vehicle for the mitigation of potential conflicts in the crystallization of education policy for Nebraska, the George Washington University Institute for Educational Leadership has created a network of state-level education seminars designed to strengthen the clarity of decisionmaking in the education policy arena.

The Nebraska Education Seminar: A Vehicle for Education Policy Development

The Nebraska Education Seminar (NES) directed by Professor Dale K. Hayes, Chairman of the Department of Educational Administration of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, had its inception in 1972. Guided by a prestigious advisory council, the NES recognized early-on that formulating education policy involves a complex array of decisionmakers--educators, laymen, and governmental officials. It was also recognized that such decisionmakers must relate effectively with boards of education, K-university, and with numerous county, state, and federal officials. The complexities of relationships among officials responsible for carrying out education policy demands leadership in the identification and framing of cogent education policy.

The Nebraska Education Seminar was organized with the recognition of the pervasive role of the Unicameral in shaping public education in the state. The Nebraska Education Seminar promotes a process-oriented approach to identifying education policy issues, and it seeks to act as a catalyst toward the realization of improved decisionmaking in the education policy arena. NES is committed to the promotion of intrastate communication and to the mitigation of intrastate parochialism in the formulation of education policy. It seeks to provide information-hungry state influentials exposure to the top thinkers in major education policy areas. This is accomplished through high quality seminars which provide a statewide perspective on salient policy issues.

The NES has as its major objective the role of neutral observer and reporter, interpreter, nexus of a statewide communication network on education policy exploration, broker of skilled personnel, including analysts, and convenor and facilitator of seminars on education policy issues.

Seminar Format

Although diversity in style and content of the NES has been the rule since its inception, the essence is usually on educators, politicians, and state influentials explaining to one another the complexities and pressures of their worlds. Discussion topics in the NES have ranged from broad

national policy issues to immediate state and local concerns. Topics for the NES in 1977 included: "Status of Coordination of Postsecondary Education in Nebraska." This was a follow-up of two seminars of the previous year. "What Might the Feds Be Up To?" was presented by Dr. Ken Hansen, Professor of Educational Administration, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "A Nebraska Education Policies Commission" offered a roundtable discussion moderated by Dr. Dale Hayes, Seminar Director. "Competency-Based Education" featured, as guest speaker, Dr. Arthur E. Wise from the National Institute of Education in Washington, D.C. "Nebraska School Finance" was a progress report by Dr. C. Cale Hudson, Professor of Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Hudson has since completed that significant study of school finance in the State of Nebraska.

The NES attempts to deal with timely topics, but regardless of the issue, there is a thread of commonality to each seminar--that of a concerned group of educators, state influentials, and policymakers working together toward common goals; goals which could include everything from discussing substantive legislation to the identification of pertinent education policy issues for analysis and discussion.

Seminar Participants

The Nebraska Education Seminars could not exist without the participants, those invited guests who contribute in some manner by virtue of their position and expertise, in some area of education policymaking. There is a well-balanced representation of participants in the seminars. In the average seminar, state legislative and executive branch members of state government comprise approximately 26 percent of the participants; 32 percent are State Department of Education officials; 13 percent represent higher education; 22 percent are involved in public school education; less than 1 percent represent the federal government; and 6 percent represent those concerned with education policymaking, but have no specific affiliation with an educational agency.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION,
Wilmer Cody, Superintendent of Schools, Birmingham, Alabama Public Schools

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Accountability was the password in education to the 1970's. The theme of institutional responsibility to its publics has not relented. Dr. Cody points to future directions accountability might lead us.

Cody defined accountability as the "degree to which public education is responsive to its clients or patrons" and stressed that the public no longer has absolute control over its schools.

The reasons for this lack of control lie in the historical perspective of education in the United States. Cody indicated that prior to 1850, there was a great deal of local control springing primarily from the large administrative committees which ran the schools. This was the era of ward politics with ethnic communities, through the committees, determining the educational destiny of their schools. The values and even the language patterns of these groups were promoted within the educational institution which served them.

Ward politics, however, were not without corruption and with the dissolution of this political system, school board members began to be selected at large. Cody contended that this led to the erosion of ethnic influence with boards of education now assuming a policymaking function rather than one of administration.

At this point executives charged with the day-to-day operations of the various institutions became common. There evolved a clear distinction between the legislative duties of the board and the administrative duties of the executives.

Efficiency in operation was a goal of most school administrators at this time and the most palatable model for superintendents was that adopted by industry. Cody saw the influence of this industrial model as threatening the policy influence of locals. Tasks such as book selection and instructional design that were previously within the realm of the local school committee and classroom instructor were now assumed by administrative personnel and state agencies.

With the emergence of state involvement in the early 1900's, school districts became further alienated from their patrons. State funding programs were to a great extent dependent upon the establishment of specified standards. Courses of study in various curricular areas were now dictated by state agencies and/or legislative bodies.

Another aspect of education in the early 1900's that aided in the deterioration of local control was the consolidation movement. Cody pointed to the fact that while 100,000 public school districts existed in 1920, only about 15,000 exist today. The ratio of board members to constituents has decreased from one per two hundred in 1920 to one per three thousand in 1974.

The mid-1900's saw two major themes which further tended to centralize the decisionmaking process in education. First, federal involvement in education increased. National security became an issue with the advent of Soviet space research and education came to be viewed as a safety measure. Federal dollars were pumped into the public schools often earmarked for programs in science and mathematics. Cody held that additional federal control was exerted in an attempt to solve the problem of poverty during this era.

The second theme evident during this time was the teacher union movement. Organizations became involved in negotiations outside the realm of salary and frequently gained a voice in the administrative process.

Cody stated that all these events have contributed to the accountability dilemma. Uniformity of programs among districts, the use of the industrial efficiency model, and general deference by governing boards to various administrative and pressure groups has created an educational system which attempts to address too many audiences. Dissatisfaction focuses on the fact that schools try to do all things for all people. The problem then becomes one of purpose rather than method. Many of the states which now have accountability laws are attempting to legislate teacher excellence. Cody maintains that statutes of this type avoid the real problem of <u>what</u> should be taught.

Cody offered some potential solutions to the accountability problem that are currently being used in various school systems. One program would increase decisionmaking on the building level by creating parent advisory groups charged with the employment and evaluation of administrators. The chief building administrator would hire staff members and implement the instructional program to comply with the objectives as established by the community.

Another plan which has some promise is the voucher system. In this program a variety of educational settings is provided and patrons select that school which espouses the educational philosophy most consistent with their own.

After Cody's remarks, the participants organized into small groups to consider the issues raised. Questions arising from these discussions included:

1. What should be the degree of student involvement in the decisionmaking process?

2. What are some financial ramifications of increased responsiveness?

3. What is the role of postsecondary education in accountability?

4. What new tack should legislatures take in accountability as compared with the past?

Discussion was spirited. Cody's premise that true accountability should deal with objectives rather than efficiency was almost totally accepted.

It would appear at this point that the subject of accountability in education will be viewed differently in the future in both the legislature and governor's office.

CURRENT STATUS: ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In Nebraska there is a major effort being made by the educational community to be accountable to the public. The recent CBS television special illustrated that in many respects the schools are not achieving their purported goals and that the public is not satisfied with the quality of education that it is receiving. The undercurrents of this resentment are being felt in Nebraska as well as across the nation. Educators cannot pretend that the lid bills are not to some extent a dissatisfaction with the schools. Although national surveys continue to indicate that education remains highly regarded, the public desires more input into the schools. The emphasis upon local control which exists in Nebraska indicates that the public wishes to keep the power close at hand rather than to delegate it to more distant, unaccessible and unresponsive authorities. The failure of bond issues and the new breed of issue-oriented school board members are both signs that the public wants more of a say into the educational system.

To meet these increased demands for accountability, the entire educational system in Nebraska has responded in a variety of ways. Open meetings are an attempt to make education more visible to the public. Various commissions with large numbers of citizens serving as members have been created at local and state levels. Curriculum committees previously only composed of educators now consist of educators, students, board members, parents, and taxpayers. The state finance study was an attempt to analyze the financial expenditures for education and to develop a more efficient cost system. Proposed rules and regulations which are based upon criterion-based minimum competencies are a response to students and the needs of the community. Course offerings from kindergarten through doctoral programs are becoming more relevant and applicable to the needs of the individual student. The entire equal educational opportunity movement is a response to the needs of students. Standards adopted by teacher institutions, the North Central Association, and various state commissions are all efforts to insure accountability. Proposals for reorganization and attaching the ESU to the State Department both arise from the concern with accountability. The potential creation of a Nebraska Education Policy Commission could be an effort to assure accountability. Community education

programs are based upon the concept that the educational system should provide for the needs of the community, its patrons.

It should be emphasized that a great deal of the concern about accountability is based upon the view of the student as an end product of the educational system. While the courts are reluctant to hold schools accountable for the inadequacies of the graduates of the system, the increased litigation in this area suggests education should become more accountable. As a first step, MBOs and job targets for both teachers and administrators are becoming more common in Nebraska. School districts involved in negotiations are attempting to relate accountability to pay increases. The problem here as in all areas of accountability is the determination of the proper measurable standard.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In his presentation to the Nebraska Education Seminar, Cody has defined accountability as "the degree to which public education is responsive to its clients or patrons." This definition has some merit but also contains some serious omissions or flaws.

To construct an operational definition of accountability requires attention to multiple factors including the identification of educational purposes and expectations, the identification of audiences which have an interest in educational practices and outcomes, and consideration of the degree of control which is present or possible in efforts made to seek attainment of purposes. Cody's definition fails to speak clearly to the issue of educational purposes, is too narrow in the selection of audiences (being limited to clients or patrons), fails to consider the degree of control available to educators (as contrasted to countervailing controls which impact upon educational operations), and ignores the question of whether or not the purposes being sought are legitimate. A further weakness is the attempt to define accountability in "public education" rather than to define the concept of accountability as applicable to all settings, including education.

Cody's position, "that true accountability should deal with objectives rather than efficiency," can be likened to the old epigram about roads which are paved with good intentions. In contrast to this premise, most definitions of accountability focus on <u>results actually attained</u> and not on the intentions or behaviors present. As Frank Jennings, editor of the <u>Teachers College Record</u>, noted:

> Accountability, whatever meaning we infuse it with, refers essentially to moral behavior. To be accountable is to have achieved an age of understanding, to have accepted and be able to carry a burden of responsibility for our orderly works and the

> accidents of our efforts. To be accountable is to have joined with some others in a self-aware community where agreement has been reached about the nature of practice and product and to accept the consequences of choice.[1]

In 1974, I defined accountability as consisting of "the ability to provide a rationale for actions which are planned and implemented, the responsibility of limiting promises to situations where sufficient control is possible so that the individual or organization can legitimately be held to account for the outcomes obtained, and the willingness to be held responsible for the outcomes which are actually achieved."[2] In a subsequent publication, this concept of accountability as responsibility was further expanded:

> As a synonym for responsibility, the concept of accountability is dependent upon the identification of objectives, the development of priorities for obtaining intended objectives, the carrying out of activities designed to reach objectives, and subsequent appraisal and reporting of the results obtained as compared and contrasted to the intended outcomes . . . This implies that promises which are made should either be limited to those situations in which sufficient control is present so that the individual or institution can be held responsible for outcomes or that the reporting of accountability should consist of being responsible for explaining the degree of congruence between intended and obtained results.[3]

One of the strengths of Cody's presentation to the Nebraska Education Seminar appears to have been his discussion of the historical influences which have shaped American education as it currently exists. These forces are explored in depth in The Politics of Education;[4] a general conclusion would be that the organization and control of education in America, during this century, has become centered within the profession and that,

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[1]Frank G. Jennings, "For the Record," Teachers College Record, Vol. 73, No. 3 (February, 1972), 333.

[2]Edgar A. Kelley, Three Views of Competency-Based Teacher Education: III: University of Nebraska (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1974), pp. 10-11.

[3]Edgar A. Kelley, R. Stephen Tegarden, J. Lloyd Trump, and Robert L. Larson, "Planning Preparation Programs," in Continuing the Search (Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975), pp. 10-11.

[4]Jay D. Scribner, editor. The Politics of Education, Seventy-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

as this trend has developed and accelerated, educators and educational institutions have become more and more separated from the society they serve. A concomitant development has been the tendency to claim territorial imperatives over areas which the school either cannot serve (due to lack of control) or areas which are, in fact, shared responsibilities with the family, neighborhood, and society.

Many of the problems faced by American education and many of the complaints directed toward educational institutions and practices are a result of educators having been willing to promise, again and again, more than can be delivered. Related problems arise from educational practices which do not fit familial and social expectations and from a general confusion within the society regarding the purposes which should be sought by schools. Educators have "taught" the population that education is the means to the "better" life--but each individual has a differing definition of what equals "better." As Harry Broudy noted, "Education, thought of as a means to a better life, is judged to be as successful as life itself happens to be."[5] In American society, we have established education as the whipping boy for each frustration or failure we face.

If education and educators are to operate within the real limits of accountability which are present, the following guidelines for thought and action seem appropriate:

1. The expectations held by society and by differing social groups must be identified. No society will tolerate, for any length of time, an educational system which does not meet its expectations.

2. Efforts must be made, at all levels, to develop societal consensus on expectations directed toward educational institutions.

3. Educators must be willing to define "expert" tasks and clearly distinguish these from "non-expert" functions. Expert tasks are those which are unique to the profession. Non-expert tasks are those which are, in reality, shared. All too often, educators have tried to claim sole or "best" knowledge for non-expert tasks such as discipline. Effective discipline, including efforts to help the learner grow in self-discipline, requires shared efforts by the school and the home, neighborhood, and society.

4. Schools must be willing to interact with other community agencies. School personnel, at times, operate outside the limits of their societal roles. An illustration is when schools or school personnel try to "handle" problems which should be referred to the police or the courts. (Some observers have classified schools as being among the most "illegal" institutions in our society,

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[5]Harry S. Broudy, The Real World of the Public Schools (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972).

especially when personnel in schools assume powers, such as police and judicial powers, not granted to the school or to the professional educator.)

5. Program outcomes--levels of knowledge, skill, attitude--should be stated for groups of students. The school cannot make legitimate promises for individuals. While the school can impact upon motivation, it cannot control the motivation or aptitude of individuals.

If educational accountability is to be improved, a number of conditions must be met. Expectations must be clearly stated and efforts need to be increased or continued to provide for identification of expectations which the society has of schools. Educators must become more skilled in seeing their primary role as consisting of providing "expert" service related to social expectations. Educational goals must be identified and limited to promises which are logical; educators must "break the habit" of over-promising. The final step is that new and improved systems of communicating results actually obtained--by groups of learners and individual learners--must be developed.

In Nebraska, educational institutions tend to be accountable to their publics. To a considerable extent, this is a "natural" result of the combination of low population and high numbers of school districts. There are, however, some examples of planned attempts for improved accountability, e.g., regular public meetings for the sole purpose of discussing public concerns and providing information about school operations, district identification of priorities for operations (including identification of areas of responsibility which cannot be handled by the school), and growing efforts to improve the reporting of educational progress of learners.

Although educational accountability in Nebraska is comparable to, or even better than, educational accountability in many other states, it is also true that many educators in Nebraska have responded to growing pressures for increased public involvement and increased educational accountability by exhibiting either a "siege mentality" or "the educator knows best" syndrome. To an increasing degree, these negative responses to public demands for educational accountability are declining.

It seems probable that educators in Nebraska, and in other locales, need to engage in a redefinition of the role of education within the society. Such a redefinition would stress the interactive role of education with society and would identify the limits of power and possibility of educational institutions. Schools would seek to limit their promises--for both programs and operations--to that which is possible and would eschew the use of sweeping generalities which have, all too often, marked the communication of educational institutions to their publics. A starting point for many schools would be to identify the tasks and functions the school is involved in and to then carefully classify activities which are sole responsibilities of the school as compared to those which are shared with other agencies.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

The public schools in Nebraska today are faced with declining enrollments, financial crisis, and increased public concern with accountability. In addition, there has been marked disagreement about educational purposes and the most desirable methods for achieving these aims. At the same time patrons are increasingly demanding demonstrable performance as called for in goal statements.

Many patrons feel qualified to reach informed opinions about teaching performance. Educators may not agree with that. They may feel that no one can make a judgment about teaching who does not know teaching intimately. However, educators who pride themselves on imaginative classroom techniques, a knack for organization, and a way with students are finding that all of that is not enough to fulfill the public's growing expectations for their schools.

Declining test scores, an apparent failure by schools to establish educational standards, and the spiraling costs for the operation of schools have, in part, contributed to the accountability dilemma. The differences between definitions of accountability are not always easily discerned, but may be partially clarified by the following description. Accountability means schools must focus on outcomes; not on process.

Perhaps the most outstanding deficiency in schools has been preoccupation with instructional process. The past overriding concern with process rather than results produced by those processes has caused many school district patrons to question the commitment of educators.

As suggested in the first paragraph of this paper, there has been marked disagreement about educational purposes and the most desirable methods for achieving these aims. There is little doubt that the questions asked of educators today will require factual answers, not educational folklore.

Factual responses by educators to questions about why schools have remedial reading and math programs; the basis for believing that small classes are educationally better; why test results by schools aren't published; and, what are the differences, if any, between a "good" school system and a "poor" school system may be a beginning toward the reconciliation of differences in perceptions about the educational purposes of the schools.

Obviously, the questions illustrated are but a sample of the many asked by patrons today. Each school occupies a unique position in its locale; it possesses its own purposes and values. In the schools teachers, students, parents, and school district patrons interact within a clearly defined set of relations. Each plays his own role. Thus, to communicate with each other and to contribute toward the accomplishment of a common goal, the interrelationships which exist between each of the above four groups must be understood.

In a changing society, the need for schools to meet the challenge of change is apparent.

Accountability, by whatever definition, is one of the changes.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: WHAT MIGHT THE FEDS BE UP TO?

Kenneth H. Hansen, Professor of Educational Administration,
University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

Federal involvement in education has been pervasive in the decade of the 70's. The federal government continues to exercise its awesome influence yet appears to be less and less helpful to the states in terms of providing meaningful direction for education policy developments and program funding. Dr. Kenneth Hansen describes the anatomy of the federal education bureaucracy in an attempt to chart the future direction of federal involvement in education.

The Federal Role in Education

Hansen stated that his presentation would focus upon what the Feds might be up to, rather than what the Feds are up to. Hansen noted that Sam Halperin, Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership, had recently stated that the current federal role in education is somewhere between poorly conceived and disastrously implemented. It was Hansen's position that perhaps Halperin was being kind in that most people (particularly educators) are hard-pressed to figure out who the Feds are, let alone determine what they are up to.

Hansen said that those individuals who have worked with federal programs think of the Feds largely as those who allocate funds or grants, who respond to written proposals and who evaluate or monitor their funded programs. He noted, however, that there are a lot of other Feds involved with a tremendous number of missions/programs. He said that anyone who, in any given evening, says how many programs there are, has yet to read tomorrow's proposals, laws, and news releases.

In describing the extent of federal involvement in education, Hansen shared the following statistics:

- Roughly 400 distinct federal educational programs are spread among 50 agencies under the jurisdiction of about one hundred committees and subcommittees of Congress.
- Roughly 439 separate statutes authorize the federal government to provide some type of federal aid to education.
- Eighteen of 22 committees of the House of Representatives have jurisdiction over federal education programs of one sort or another.
- Sixteen of 18 committees of the Senate have jurisdiction over federal education programs of one sort or another.

- Roughly 40 education programs are under the jurisdiction of joint House/Senate committees.

- Roughly 12,000 House/Senate congressional employees are each working for someone who has an education program in which they have special interest/authority.

Hansen stated that we not only have Feds in Congress, but that we also have them in the executive and judicial branches of government. He said that HEW itself has no coherent structure and although there is an education division in HEW, all education programs are not housed there. The education programs are, in fact, scattered all over the place. Hansen noted the overlap in federal agencies and personnel in terms of education program responsibilities, i.e., NIE, OCR, OSHA, BIA, etc. Hansen quoted Kingman Brewster, the President of Yale University, as having said, "The Feds take the position that now that I have bought the buttons I have the right to design the coat; they (the Feds) gave a little bit of money, now they want to run the whole show."

Development of Federal Education Policy

In examining the manner in which federal policy for education is determined, Hansen said that federal policy is rarely formulated as a result of policy research or program evaluation. To support this assertion, he cited a list compiled by Robert Andringa of eleven rank-ordered items which influence staff members in Congress in policymaking. Regarding the list, Hansen noted that actual policy research is number nine on the list and program evaluation was ranked last, or in eleventh place! It was Hansen's position that even when education policy research is conducted, that the research is inefficient and often a waste of time and resources. He quoted Mike Timpane as having said that "the input of educational and social science research may create as much ambiguity as assurance. Research information is the kind that provides slightly irrelevant answers to somewhat inappropriate questions!"

A Laundry List of Concerns for State and Local Education

Hansen, in providing insight into the political/policy machinations facing educators and citizens across the land, commented on the following topics:

Federal Interference. In a study recently completed by Hansen for the U.S. Commissioner of Education, it was found that legal conflicts exist between state and federal statutes in fifty states and in six territorial jurisdictions. Legal conflicts were found to be particularly evident in three major areas: vocational education, education for the handicapped, and in the education for the disadvantaged. In essence the federal government has mandated education policy, rules, and regulations with which the states cannot legally comply.

Overwhelming Expenditures. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act was cited, and it was noted that the Act alone requires that all programs and facilities be adapted to meet the access needs of the handicapped. Additionally, the role of the Occupational Health and Safety Agency (OSHA) was used as an example of federal policy requiring the "renovation" of existing facilities to meet rigid "safety" requirements. Hansen stated that these two federal mandates alone could run costs to state and local governments into hundreds of millions of dollars in order for the governments to meet federal compliance.

Red Tape. Hansen accused the federal bureaucracy of legalistic and bureaucratic overkill. He quoted Thomas Jefferson as having stated (as early as 1817 in a proposal to establish an elementary school system in Virginia) that he disliked the verbose and intricate style of the modern English statutes, and that in his proposal he was given to restoring the style of writing statutes to the simple one of the ancient statutes. It was Hansen's opinion that federal offices should perhaps take a lesson from Jefferson as they draft rules and regulations affecting education.

Policy Alternatives in Federal Aid to Education

In exploring the notion of policy alternatives in federal aid to education, juxtaposed with current education policy at the federal level, it was Hansen's position that there exist basically three alternatives:

The first alternative is that of funding in block (broad) grants versus the current practice of categorical (targeted) grant funding. Hansen said that in Joseph Califano's (HEW) confirmation hearings, Califano stated that the federal government should get rid of categorical funding strategies. However, in the same breath, Califano insisted that the Secretary of HEW be given the authority, without statutory limitation, to target general federal aid to priority groups. In Hansen's judgment, this means categorical funding would continue under such an arrangement.

The second alternative would require the separation of the education function from HEW and the establishment of a separate cabinet department rather than the current broad human services role of HEW. Hansen noted, however, that Mr. Chris Cross, an influential Senate aid, has stated the "idea of a separate cabinet is an idea whose time has come . . . and gone!"

The third alternative would be the complete abdication of federal aid to education by taking up all the costs of welfare. Hansen said that the Education Commission of the States has been discussing this idea for several years. The basic thrust of the plan is to have the Feds take over all welfare costs while state and local governments assume all education costs.

It was Hansen's judgment that Congress has not established any rational "ground rules" for their own participation in education. He cited examples of "double-speak" in Title IX rules and regulations and in the lack of freedom allowed the U.S. Commissioner of Education. In effect, Congress is

"tying the hands" of federal officials responsible for implementation of Congressional statutes, and simultaneously Congress is generating "conflicting" legislation with which the states are expected to comply.

Education and the 95th Congress

It was Hansen's opinion that the 95th Congress will approach the subject of education in a "productive" manner, and that education is wide open for new things.

Hansen said that 1,400 bills were introduced on the first day of the 95th Congress, with many of them related to education. He noted that many of the "new bills" are really "old bills," yet these bills hold great potential if by chance they were to become law. A few examples of bills again before Congress were cited: general aid; preschool education; career education; bus safety; mobile teacher retirement; emergency aid to local districts; handicapped education; emergency school assistance, etc. Hansen said that of the 125 plus specific education bills thus far introduced, there are "straws in the wind" among them.

Trends in Education Leadership at the Federal Level

Hansen observed that the "new leadership group" in Washington possesses strong social policy interests, much stronger than those that were formed basically throughout HEW under the previous administration. He said that Joseph Califano was one of the primary architects of the "great society program" under L.B.J.

It was Hansen's opinion that the "new Feds" are going to push social policy very strongly. He pointed out that their concept of social policy is a lot of welfare and a minuscule bit of education. Concomitantly, he felt it was clear that the new leadership team is strongly tilted toward higher education. He said that this opinion is partially borne out by the fact that the new assistant secretary for planning and operation, the new assistant secretary for education, and the new Commissioner of Education are all past professionals from the field of higher education.

Hansen stated that there is "growing sensitivity to state and local governments" and to the general constituencies of the federal government. He noted that all of what he had said in the Seminar was not negative nor had he intended his comments to be so taken. It was his feeling that the Feds are moving in a direction that demonstrates that the Feds know that educators are alive. As an example, he cited the creation of the Office of Regulatory Review, which in essence requires that before any rules and regulations are published affecting an educational program, or <u>any</u> program in HEW, there must first be a notice of intent to publish a rule or regulation. Hansen also made note of the fact that President Carter recently proclaimed he was going to have all the rules and regulations written (<u>ala</u> Jefferson) so everyone could understand them--and he plans to read each of them, himself!

With regard to the several federal regional offices throughout the United States, Hansen noted that these offices will continue to serve a key role in communications and joint planning with state and local governments. He said that Federal Region 10 had recently completed a study of ways to simplify grant application and review. Hansen was optimistic toward this type of activity and felt that if such studies were done and acted upon, the role of the federal government with state and local governments could drastically improve.

In commenting on new directions in federal leadership, Hansen said that he sees a major change of direction from the Feds in terms of "greater evenhandedness," particularly in terms of the federal judiciary. Hansen believes that moderation in the remedies coming from the courts is inevitable. He cited Affirmative Action, hiring quotas, and zoning cases as substantive trends toward moderation in federal court decisions.

In closing his comments on trends in federal leadership, Hansen stated that we can look for new thrusts in federal budgeting. He said that the funding emphases have changed greatly over the past twenty years. He said that benefit payments to individuals have grown from about 20 percent to 45 percent of the federal budget, i.e., ADC, tax rebates, welfare, Medicare, medical, Social Security, education, etc. He emphasized that the money is going to individuals, not social institutions. Hansen said that defense spending is little criticized these days because defense cost has, in the past twenty years, dropped from 55 percent of the federal budget to only 24 percent of the federal budget.

Summary

Hansen said that many of his observations appear only as "straws in the wind." He said that there is no gale blowing that will tell us exactly what is going to happen, but one thing seems clear; education is not going to get any more money. It was his feeling that increases will come, but they won't exceed rising inflation.

Hansen felt that Congress will, more and more, specify desired results in education programs, rather than just prescribing methodologies. He was in support of this approach, as long as results can be shown to be forthcoming. Along with this emphasis on results of programs, Hansen sees increasing simplification of application and funding/auditing procedures. It was Hansen's judgment that a real trend toward decentralization of decisionmaking down to the state and local level is inevitable. He felt that the basis for this decentralization rests with a new sense of "trust" which emanates from the wedding of democrats in the Congress and the executive branches of government.

Salient Questions/Comments

1. Nationwide, the states are in a lot better fiscal shape than the federal government. I'd like to see a lot more federal aid, but I just don't believe we are going to get it.

2. We should get the Feds to take over welfare, much as they have law enforcement and the judiciary.

3. Why does all federal policy have to come from the Feds? Why can't it be a two-way street?

4. The federal policy established is not coherent! When they do establish policy, it's usually on the wrong basis.

5. I strongly support policy coming from the states.

6. You don't work with a Congressman, you work with his/her staff.

7. Right now in Nebraska, potential battles are shaping up between K-12 and higher education systems for the dollars available to education.

8. The turn-around time for real change in the federal administration is three to four years.

9. What kinds of changes will take place in the reorganization of HEW and the Office of Education?

10. I think a single office will house the assistant secretary and Commissioner of Education.

CURRENT STATUS: WHAT MIGHT THE FEDS BE UP TO?

Traditionally education has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to be a state function. However, the federal government's involvement in education continues to increase. President Carter's proposal for a separate Cabinet position for a Department of Education appears likely to become a reality this term, with bills currently in both the House and Senate. If this proposal becomes law, there is certain to be an increase in federal involvement at least during the initial formulation period. The Department of Education is currently placing emphasis upon equal educational opportunity. The courts continue to be interested in the area of desegregation, but the recent Bakke decision may lead to further litigation. Individual rights continue to be litigated in the school arena. It is clear that the federal government does not intend to reduce its involvement with education. The Feds still desire to control the pursestrings when granting federal aid; there is no appreciable reduction in red tape, despite the President's campaign promises; and as yet the government has not developed a comprehensive educational policy at the national level.

On both the local and state level there is a growing dissatisfaction with the federal involvement in the educational process. The complaint is not about money but requirements which are attached to federal largesse. Much of the dissatisfaction at the state level appears to be procedural in

nature, but at the local level the expenses of compliance with Congressional legislation, HEW directives, and court mandates are of primary concern. As budgets become increasingly constrained, the local taxpayer may well revolt if the Feds continue to attempt to use the schools as vehicles for social reform without providing the funds to fuel the system.

References: NES seminar discussions, reports; Collegium IV and V; Nebraska Public School Finance Study; U.S. Law Week; selected interviews; Law and Education Seminar--UN-L.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: WHAT MIGHT THE FEDS BE UP TO?

The current status of the involvement of the federal government in education in Nebraska is not unlike its status in other states. In the last 25 years an intense love-hate relationship has developed between the federal government and institutions of higher education. We love the support in the form of dollars that we have received but we hate the strings attached to these dollars.

Federal assistance in the form of funding reflects the recent trend of providing aid predominately in the form of student assistance rather than institutional assistance. The emphasis will not diminish in the years ahead primarily due to political considerations.

Congress and the Executive Branch increasingly view public and private institutions of education as businesses and thus subject them to the same restrictions and regulations promulgated in such areas as OSHA regulations, personnel, retirement age, equal opportunity, affirmative action, and handicapped guidelines.

With regard to future direction of federal programs in education in Nebraska, it is safe to predict in the postsecondary arena that we will continue to see support for the concept of student aid rather than institutional aid. We can expect expansion of student assistance programs to cover the increasingly greater array of students. On the programmatic side we will witness a heightened interest in funds available for basic research and graduate education, although growth in real dollars in these areas will be minimal. The University of Nebraska Medical Center will witness the end of capitation grant funding and have to attract federal support based on programs that attempt to tackle the problems of manpower distribution and the lack of family practitioners.

With the advent of a separate department of education we will see a greater visibility on the part of the national education commissioner. There will thus be an increased impetus for national planning and direction in education from the federal level. There will be a tendency for the new department head to become a "czar." Another resulting effect could be a greater effort by the federal government to enforce the rules and regulations

accompanying legislation dealing with equal opportunity, civil rights, handicapped rights, etc. Out of this emphasis will stem a stifling atmosphere of legalism that will come to pervade the academic community.

Finally, I think we can expect to see increased attempts by state government to prohibit the spending of federal funds until they have been appropriated to the state budgeting process. We shall witness a growing demand for state control over federal aid to education.

We will witness no new major thrusts or major overhauls but rather an extension and refinement of the current programs and a tightening of the administration of those programs.

The State of Nebraska must become more competitive for discretionary funds in basic and applied research; but should not take the shotgun approach in seeking those funds. Specific programmatic goals and objectives must be developed relative to research needs based on the cultural, economic, environmental, and demographic makeup of the state. Areas of concentration should be developed in energy, water, agriculture, small business, aging, and the culture of the Plains. We must spice long-range planning with practicality as well as vision.

Institutions of higher education in Nebraska need to continually reinvigorate their processes for affirmative action and equal opportunity. Goals and objectives of these programs must continually be held up for examination with a minimum amount of bureaucracy and a maximum degree of humanity. If this commitment is made, we must vigorously demand increased support for institutional aid in order that we might comply with various OSHA, Title IX, Section 504, affirmative action, etc., requirements.

Nebraskans have not done well in developing and refining a network of contacts and/or associates within the federal government than can lend a sympathetic ear to the concerns of our state in the area of education. Oftentimes the education bureaucrats making adverse decisions back in Washington have cut their teeth at some level of educational administration or instruction. Nebraskans have not developed a Washington "pipeline" that many other states and their institutions of higher education have done. This pipeline provides a constant interchange between faculty and administrators and powerful staff positions in the federal bureaucracy.

The demand by citizens and their federal representatives for more effective stewardship by educational institutions must be viewed in a programmatic light. Although more time might be required in evaluating and monitoring programs the increased credibility to be gained by such practices may in the long run be beneficial. Educational institutions must get about the business of managing resources in the truest sense of stewardship.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: WHAT MIGHT THE FEDS BE UP TO?

Federal involvement in public education in Nebraska, as it is in all states, is little more than periodic handouts of funds appropriated by Congress under complicated formulae calling for additional federal and state level personnel to develop and interpret complex regulations and determine how the money will be used and distributed. There has been little constructive leadership from the federal office for leadership personnel is frequently changing, bogged down in "red tape," and subject to the currents of everchanging interpretations of regulations. True, a vast amount of money has been poured into each state on a quite equitable basis. However, it would be interesting to contemplate what might have been accomplished if the same programs had been funded by local boards of education or the state rather than receiving the money from Washington.

Federal involvement in Nebraska education will continue in much the same manner and direction until such time as a Cabinet-level Department of Education is legislated by Congress and approved by the President and the new leadership has the opportunity to clearly define the role, purpose and objectives of the Department.

The federal government should get out of the grant and aid business as far as the public schools are concerned. The common schools should be governed and funded on the local level with some help from the state. The U.S. Department of Education could very properly be a national clearinghouse for educational data, do research and make studies in cooperation with State Departments of Education and higher education teacher training institutions, and manage and direct the various educational programs within the several federal agencies.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS, NATIONAL/NEBRASKA, David W. Hutcheson, Director, Bureau of Educational Research and Field Services, and Associate Professor, Educational Administration, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

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Since their creation, educational service units in Nebraska have been perceived at once as both a salvation to school districts with special needs and, conversely, a major obstacle to needed school district reorganization. Dr. David Hutcheson provides provocative insight into the role and function of ESU's both in Nebraska and nationally.

The Necessity of Research on ESU's Nationally and in Nebraska

Hutcheson opened his presentation by providing the participants with a copy of a research report which was descriptive of the organization, administration, and general characteristics of educational service units nationally and in Nebraska. Hutcheson indicated that approximately one year ago he and several other educators decided that it would be appropriate, with all of the discussion of L.B. 403 (Nebraska special education mandate to local schools) and the apparent dissatisfaction with the manner in which ESU's were operating, to take an in-depth look at ESU's some ten years after their creation. The basic idea was to research ESU's in Nebraska to ascertain needed corrections and ferret out those viable services in the provision of elementary and secondary education in the state.

In order to complete the research, county and district superintendents across the state were asked their suggestions and recommendations regarding how their (ESU's) operation might be improved. In completion of the research, a questionnaire was developed which included a review of literature in several other states describing their regional service operations. Hutcheson indicated that he received a good deal of cooperation from Mr. Bob Stephens who recently completed a study of regional service units throughout the several states.

Hutcheson stated that a major goal of the study was to examine demographic variables common to the operation of ESU's in Nebraska and to describe any observable changes in their ten-year history. Hutcheson stated, "We asked ourselves a basic question as we completed the research: Are we happy with the way in which elementary and secondary education is organized in Nebraska? We tried to glean from the literature, from superintendents and other contacts around the state some of the central issues of the organization and administration of public schools in Nebraska."

ESU's Nationally

In focusing on the review of literature on ESU's nationwide, the following approaches were identified:

1. A single statewide system (Hawaii)
2. The two-echelon system (larger local school districts)
3. Cooperative arrangements
4. Regional state education agencies
5. Special service agencies

Hutcheson indicated that the literature demonstrated that the legislation on ESU formation is both permissive and mandatory. He described a cross-section of several states as follows:

Georgia: A statewide system of Cooperative Educational Service Units. At least four districts must request approval for formation of the unit through the state education unit. The governing boards of the units consist of representation of each participating school district. Services offered include special education (psychological), classes for the multiple handicapped, subject matter consultants, and vocational-technical education.

Iowa: A statewide network of 15 Area Education Agencies. Boundaries are coterminous with the state's 15 area community college districts. Nine member governing boards are elected by the membership of boards of constituent local school districts. Services offered include: special education, media services, and computer and data process planning.

Pennsylvania: Twenty-nine Intermediate Units with Philadelphia and Pittsburgh possessing two of the units. Participation in the services of a unit is voluntary and 13 member boards are elected from the boards of local constituent school districts. Services offered include vocational-technical education, data processing, media, and special education.

Texas: A statewide network of 20 Educational Service Centers for its 254 counties. The governing boards of the service centers consist of five to seven elected by a joint committee of each constituent school district and four-year colleges located within its boundaries. The major services offered include media, computer facilities, subject matter consultants, special education consultants, migrant education, driver education, drug abuse and crime prevention, and comprehensive regional planning and evaluation.

Washington: Fourteen Intermediate School Districts. The seven to nine member governing boards are elected by popular vote in the districts. Major services offered include administration, legal consultants, financial consultants, media, and regulatory services.

West Virginia: A statewide system of eight Regional Education Service Agencies. The governing boards consist of two representatives from each constituent school district, a member of the board, the superintendent of schools and one member appointed by the state superintendent of schools. Services offered include administrative, curriculum, media, and instruction.

Wisconsin: Nineteen Cooperative Education Service Agencies. The agencies are governed by a board of representatives of constituent school boards. Services provided include special education, curriculum consulting, media, and data processing.

Colorado: Two or more school districts from Boards of Cooperative Services, with 17 boards in operation in 1974. The governing board consists of five members with a minimum of one representative from each local district selected by boards of education of constituent local school districts. Services offered include staff development, special education, administration, and media.

Michigan: Fifteen multi-county Intermediate School Districts. Board members are elected at large or by local boards of education. Services offered include special education, vocational-technical education, media, and staff development.

New York: Forty-seven permissive Cooperative Educational Service Districts. Board members are elected by members of local districts at an annual convention. Services offered include itinerant teachers, special education, pupil personnel, administration and management, vocational-technical education, media, and staff development.

Oregon: Twenty-nine Educational Intermediate Districts in Oregon. Seven-member governing boards are elected by popular vote of the electors in a district. Services offered include special education, curriculum development, inservice education, media, cooperative purchasing, outdoor education, career education, management, and regulatory services.

Hutcheson indicated that a review of the literature and perusal of Mr. Bob Stephens' research led to the following thirty recommendations for the effective organization and administration of Regional Education Service Agencies:[1]

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[1]These recommendations have been gleaned from the following sources: Robert E. Stephens, Regional Educational Service Agencies (Arlington, VA: ERS, Inc., 1975); Stephen J. Knezevich, Administration of Public Education (New York: Harper & Row, 1969); Roald F. Campbell et al., The Organization and Control of American Schools (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Publishing Company, 3d ed., 1975); and Edgar Morphet et al., Educational Organization and Administration (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974).

1. Enabling legislation should be enacted to require the state education agency to conduct a comprehensive review of Regional Educational Service Agencies biannually.

2. Enabling legislation should require the state legislature, in cooperation with the state education agency, to conduct a comprehensive review of Regional Educational Service Agencies every five years.

3. The State Board of Education should be authorized to adjust Regional Educational Service Agency boundary lines with appropriate procedures for studying and planning under guidelines and criteria established by the legislature.

4. The intermediate unit should be large enough to provide efficiently a variety of services needed by the school districts in the intermediate area but which cannot be operated by the district's acting alone. It should not, however, be so large that it precludes close personal relations among intermediate unit and community school staff members.

5. The legislature should require the State Board of Education to establish the following criteria to guide any future adjustments in Regional Educational Service Agency boundaries: (a) public school enrollment in grades K-12 sufficiently and economically, (b) a financial base sufficiently large to offer needed specialized programs and services efficiently and economically.

6. Enabling legislation granting the responsibility to the State Board of Education for developing department rules and regulations for administration and operation of the Regional Educational Service Agencies.

7. Regional Educational Service Agencies should be governed by a board popularly elected within each district, plus at-large members elected by voters of Regional Educational Service Agencies. (At-large members should be about half the total number of district representatives to maintain balance.)

8. The governing boards of Regional Education Agencies should be required to develop rules and regulations subject to policies of the State Board of Education and statutory and constitutional requirements.

9. Governing boards of Regional Educational Service Agencies should be authorized to appoint their respective chief administrators.

10. Revised. The governing board of the Regional Educational Service Agencies should be required to maintain one general advisory board composed of one representative appointed by each constituent school district board and the chief administrator of the district. The service nature of the intermediate unit requires that it be

sensitive to the needs of the community schools. The intermediate unit board of education must determine policies with respect to the collective demands and interests of the community schools.

11. Provision should be made for administrative coordination. An administrative advisory group, made up of all the community school administrators in the intermediate unit's area, should meet regularly with and advise the intermediate unit superintendent. Problems regarding the selection and functioning of intermediate unit staff, evaluation of specific services, schedules, and the many other details of administrative nature must be planned cooperatively.

12. Each local school district in the state should be included in a Regional Educational Service Agency.

13. Boundaries of Regional Educational Service Agencies should be such that the center or satellite center of the unit be within one hour's driving time of a substantial majority of constituent school districts.

14. Geographic boundaries of Regional Educational Service Agencies should adhere closely to boundaries of states' regional planning and programming units.

15. Basic orientation of Regional Educational Service Agencies should be the provision of programs and services to constituent local districts.

16. Allocate the function to that echelon of the system closest to the student, where it may be carried out with completeness, equity, efficiency, and responsibility.

17. The Regional Educational Service Agency governing board should be authorized to offer any educational program or service needed by constituent school districts, subject to approval of the State Department of Education. The services the intermediate unit should provide will vary from place to place and from time to time. Services initiated by the intermediate unit may, in some instances, be transferred to the community schools, and vice versa.

18. All constituent local school districts should be eligible for participation in programs and services of Regional Educational Service Agencies.

19. The governing board of Regional Educational Service Agencies should have the authority to enter into contractual agreements with any public or private agencies for purpose of providing programs and services to local school districts, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education.

20. Provision should be made for cooperation among intermediate units. The desirable service area for a few specialized services may be larger than a single intermediate unit. Considerable advantage may be gained through the sharing of such a service by two or more intermediate units.

21. Service provided by Regional Educational Service Agencies for the State Department of Education should be limited to data gathering, planning, communicative and disseminating functions. The performance of regulatory and ministerial functions should be excluded.

22. The professional staff of the Regional Educational Service Agencies should meet certification standards established by the State Department of Education.

23. The governing board of the Regional Educational Service Agencies should have the authority to employ non-certificated specialists subject to the approval of the State Department of Education.

24. Regional Educational Service Agency boards should have the authority to enter into a contractual agreement with other public agencies for joint employment of personnel, subject to approval of the State Department of Education.

25. The financing of intermediate unit activities should come from one or more of the following sources: (1) federal funds, (2) state grants, (3) county funds, (4) tax levies over the entire intermediate unit, and (5) contractual agreements with local districts. Authority to tax is important to the intermediate unit.

26. The state should assume responsibility for a foundation program by underwriting the minimum program to be provided by the intermediate unit within the state.

27. Regional Educational Service Agencies should be authorized to receive state aid on an equalization basis. The state should allocate a flat grant per unit for administration.

28. All federal monies going to Regional Educational Service Agencies should be channeled through and authorized by the State Department of Education.

29. A budget for all intermediate district activities should be prepared by the intermediate district superintendent and approved by the intermediate district board in accordance with state regulations and practice.

30. Regional Educational Service Agencies should be authorized to acquire and hold title to real estate.

ESU's in Nebraska

Hutcheson described in some detail the operation of educational service units in Nebraska. In explication of the Nebraska research, he made the following points:

- When the units were established, there were seventeen. In 1970, by virtue of reorganization, the larger districts of Lincoln and Omaha each created their own unit, which falls completely within school district boundaries.

- When the units began, there were eighteen counties excluded from any unit. Over the years the number has reduced to nine.

- Nebraska's largest unit has 181 schools within it, and its smallest 21 schools.

- A major question is: has the organization of units in the state retarded the reorganization of school districts? Since 1965, there has been a 50 percent reduction in school districts in the state. The median number of school districts per unit in 1973 was 62, those regionally ranged from 21 to 180.

- Student enrollments are decreasing in many school districts in the state and authorities recommend no fewer than 10-12,000 students for a unit to operate efficiently and effectively.

- Nebraska currently has one unit which services an area of 8,959 square miles. This is an unusually large area to be serviced and poses special problems.

- With regard to assessed valuation, Unit 3 (with the exception of Omaha) has the largest, with approximately 616 million dollars. The smallest is Unit 17, with an assessed valuation of 129 million dollars. The trend as indicated by the data is for the district with the greatest number of pupils to have the lowest assessed valuation.

- There are 12 units with mill levies, and few of them levy less than one mill.

- Millard School District has experienced the greatest growth in school enrollment in the past ten years with an increase of 334 percent.

- The Omaha area is clearly on the increase in terms of enrollment. Ten districts out of the largest 25 have, however, noted losses in enrollments.

Hutcheson offered the following conclusions and recommendations as a result of research completed by county and school district superintendents in 1974-1975:

1. There is a continuing need for educational service units in Nebraska to provide supplementary educational services to local school districts upon a request basis.

2. Educational service units should operate as intermediate units with clearly defined responsibilities to local boards of education and to State Boards of Education.

3. Boards and administrators of educational service units should explore through needs assessment procedures opportunities for offering supplementary services in addition to those identified as "special education."

4. The administration and boards of educational service units should explore various ways to finance the educational service unit upon an equitable basis which is efficient and economical without causing undue hardships for any local school district within a given educational service unit's geographical area.

5. Whenever a local board of education can efficiently and economically provide a specific service, the board of education of the educational service unit should encourage the local school district to do so.

6. The State Board of Education, through the State Department of Education, should adopt rules and regulations for the operation of educational service units in addition to those rules and regulations which apply to local school districts. Such rules and regulations should include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

   a. Cooperatively develop a comprehensive standardized annual report for the operations of the educational service units.

   b. Develop criteria that will distinguish between a basic program which should be provided by local school districts and supplementary services that can be offered through the educational service units.

   c. Review periodically programs and services offered through the various educational service units to determine whether or not services provided are actually supplementary in nature.

   d. Encourage boards of educational service units to: (1) develop board policies, (2) functional advisory committees, and (3) require certification of professional staff members.

   e. Provide necessary and desirable educational services for students through: (1) the local board of education, (2) by contracting with other educational agencies including educational service units, and/or (3) state-supported institutions.

f. Determine ways to establish a cooperative approach between the State Board of Education and boards of educational service units for collecting and disseminating pertinent data relative to needs and status of educational programs within the state.

g. Refrain from offering educational services which can more effectively and efficiently be provided by a local board of education and/or a board of education of an educational service unit.

h. Determine appropriate changes in boundaries of existing service units whenever an educational service unit becomes too large or too small to function efficiently and/or economically.

7. All units utilized an advisory board which functions in a variety of ways to meet different aspirations, needs, and circumstances. Local school administrators were not always aware of: (1) the existence of an advisory board, (2) its functions, and (3) its make-up.

8. Section 79-2210 which pertains to the adoption of an educational service unit's budget and the levy of a tax, "not to exceed one mill on the dollar on the assessed valuation of all property except intangible property within its geographical unit" should be continued.

9. Sections 79-2201 to 79-2204 should be revised to permit reorganization of educational service units whenever it is deemed necessary to change the boundaries of existing educational service units. (The data of July 1, 1970 which are repeated several times are out-dated.)

10. The regulatory and/or obsolete functions of the office of the county superintendent should be assigned to other agencies <u>prior</u> to the transferring of any educational functions to the boards of educational service units.

11. As soon as possible, the educational service units should become the <u>only</u> intermediate educational-administrative unit in Nebraska.

12. Legislation should be enacted to clarify the functions and/or operations of the educational service units.

Recommendations

In accordance with the above stated conclusions, the following recommendations are offered.

1. It is recommended that educational service units become the only intermediate educational-administrative units in the State of Nebraska.

2. It is recommended that the State Board of Education designate a professional coordinator and/or director in the State Department of Education to provide leadership and coordination to the educational service units.

3. It is recommended that legislation be enacted which would empower the State Board of Education to: (a) adopt necessary rules and regulations for the administration of the educational service units, and (b) develop plans and procedures for reorganizing an educational service unit whenever it is necessary beyond the date of July 1, 1970.

4. It is recommended that legislation be enacted to establish guidelines for reorganizing boundaries of educational service units. Such guidelines should include: (a) the maximum size of geographical area, (2) the minimum assessed valuation of the proposed reorganized educational service units, (c) the minimum number of persons to be served, (d) the types of services needed but not provided, and (e) any additional data deemed to be pertinent by the legislature.

5. It is recommended that provisions in the statutes pertaining to the budget of an educational service unit and the maximum one-mill tax levy be retained.

Conclusion

Dale K. Hayes closed the seminar with a brief history of the legislation which created ESU's in Nebraska. He stated that the idea behind the units focused on the question of how many total people does one need in an area to provide certain special services to children with special educational needs. He felt that the concern of the seminar participants were two in number: (1) Whether the research and background presented provides viable alternatives for Nebraska? and (2) If so, what can be done with the alternatives? It was his hope that the educators in attendance could deal with the subject of ESU's dispassionately enough to communicate with the legislators.

Salient Questions/Comments

1. Should ESU's be student service or administrative service oriented?

2. Have you prioritized your recommendations, Dr. Hutcheson?

3. It appears in reviewing the units in other states that they are somewhat balanced between student and administrative orientation.

4. There is a strong tie between ESU's in the several states and their State Departments of Education, but this is not true in Nebraska.

5. Do we need mandatory advisory committees/councils to ESU's in Nebraska?

6. It seems essential to spell out the needs of local school districts through cooperation between the ESU's and the State Department of Education.

7. Do we need county superintendent offices in view of the potential role of ESU's?

8. We aren't getting our dollars back in services which go for the operation of the units.

9. Should students be dealt with directly by the ESU's?

10. Has there been an effort by any state to identify the most suitable services for a unit to provide, and the best delivery system?

11. Could reorganization of school districts in the state preclude the need for ESU's?

12. It's my feeling that ESU's ought to be set up and their administrative cost be paid for by the state, but the services provided should be paid for by the district.

13. One mill levies for units in this state are only going to cause headaches.

14. If we create 19 regional offices we will be "building in" more bureaucratic layering which will be more expensive and create more administrative and communication problems than we now have.

15. I don't think we ought to use ESU's to compensate for the needed reorganization of the State Department of Education.

16. Regional offices should allow for a "decentralization" of the functions of the State Department of Education.

CURRENT STATUS: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS, NATIONAL/NEBRASKA

The educational service unit in Nebraska is becoming increasingly important due to a variety of factors including handicapped legislation, special programs, and curricular needs. Nonetheless, few of Hutcheson's recommendations have as yet been implemented. There has been no legislation authorizing the State Department of Education to have a more direct control of the ESU. As long as membership in the ESU remains voluntary,

there is no way to a statewide quality of services if control is vested in the ESU. One of the basic problems facing ESU's continues to be the method by which they are financed. A proposed alternative would have the state assume administrative costs while the local districts would be responsible for service-related expenses.

While legislation is the primary necessity to implement further progress and development of the ESU, there are other factors which also must be resolved. Presently the State Department of Education provides extensive service throughout the state in specific departments. There is a resistance to the ESU by the personnel associated with these departments since they do not want to give up these responsibilities. As a practical matter, some of this resistance is no doubt also due to the fear of loss of employment or relocation. It cannot be disputed that due to federal legislation and financial pressure on local budgets, the ESU in Nebraska will continue to increase in importance in the educational system of the state. To facilitate this progress, the issues of the role of the county superintendent and the State Department's relationship to the ESU must be resolved as quickly as possible.

References: Nebraska Revised Statutes §79,2201, 2210; NES seminars, reports, and discussion; State Department interviews; Nebraska Public School Finance Study; Collegium IV; selected ESU interviews.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS, NATIONAL/NEBRASKA

Present Status of ESU's in Nebraska

To my knowledge, each of the service units in Nebraska are contributing services upon a requested basis. The types of services offered by the educational service units are varied throughout the state, in part due to the services contracted by the local districts. Also, due to recent legislation, less emphasis is being given to special education.

The majority of the administrators have remained with the service units since they were created. With the experiences of these administrators providing a stabilizing factor, the effectiveness of the various programs have improved over time. The sharing of ideas among the administrators has broadened the types of programs which are being offered. The regular meetings of the administrators have been beneficial to the individual administrators and the service units which they serve.

Future Directions of ESU's

The local district must remain the basic agency which offers educational services. Consequently, educational service units should provide supplementary services upon a requested basis, as is currently done.

The financing of the service units should be reconsidered since the property tax (a one mill limit) is the major source of funding for the ESU's. There should be greater emphasis given to securing funds from contracting services to local districts, state and national sources, and securing grants from public and private funds. There should be provided preparational programs for ESU personnel, seminars for personnel, and/or inservice programs for staff members. Considerable time is spent in orienting staff members to recognize: (a) the differences between the operation of a local district and a regional agency, and (b) the distinction between the basic educational programs of a local district and the supplementary services of a regional agency.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, Kenneth H. Hansen, Commissioner of Education, State of Nevada

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Constitutional provisions, statutes, and decades of operations of schools have not resolved one key issue--the role of the state in public education. A former chief state school officer discusses this vital topic.

Hansen's talk began with the establishment of areas of commonality among states in relation to the discussion of state department/state board of education functions and relationship. This was done because of a concern on Hansen's part of being an "outsider" (i.e., from Nevada) in Nebraska. However, the areas defined which validate Hansen's comments are that all states subscribe to:

1. local control of the operation of education
2. the state serves in an overview capacity in education
3. lay control of education.

In the address it was noted that generalizations about education beyond the above three begin to break down in light of individual state situations.

As outlined by Hansen, the address was structured into four broad categories:

1. the function of the state education agency
2. the improvement of the state education agency
3. barriers to improvement and leadership of the state education agency
4. roles and relation of the state education agency and the governing board for education.

1. The Function of the State Education Agency (SEA)

Hansen noted that there are four functions for state education agencies. While noting these four he elaborated regarding each. The first two functions are regulation and supervision. These two functions are legitimized through state financial support of education as well as constitutional specifications. These functions are primarily of a

"policing" nature in that the SEA oversees the execution of the laws pertinent to education in the state.

The third function of the SEA is that of service. This function is for and on behalf of the local districts. Hansen noted that this is the most important function of the SEA, yet it is not inseparable from the first two functions of regulation and supervision. That is, the SEA cannot be regulatory and supervisory without providing the services necessary to allow local districts to meet the standards established. As an example, Hansen pointed out that should a SEA fulfill a certification function (regulatory, supervisory), then it should also provide the inservice (service) to the local districts that is necessary for them to meet the certification code.

The fourth function of the state education agency outlined is that of leadership. According to Hansen, that is the least exercised function of SEA's. He attributed this to the bureaucratic nature of the SEA. Since the SEA seldom fulfills the fourth function, the leadership in this regard is often taken by the governing board.

2. The Improvement of the State Education Agency

As a result of the three areas of commonality among states regarding education, Hansen made five propositions for improving state education agencies.

In order to enhance the quality of performance of SEA's, he proposed that:

1. There should be a reduction in the regulation-supervision function of the SEA;

2. SEA service should be oriented toward services as defined and needed by the local district;

3. SEA's should reduce the publication function and direct energies toward the establishment of a central, national clearinghouse for education publications;

4. Research functions of the SEA should be eliminated and that this be "farmed out" to institutions of higher education or other agencies competent to perform "as needed" research work;

5. SEA staffs should be reduced with emphasis placed on the hiring of specialists on an ad hoc "as needed" basis.

3. Barriers to the Improvement and Leadership of the State Education Agency

Hansen offered his perceptions of barriers that exist for the improvement and leadership of the SEA. First, the SEA is often caught in power shifts and struggles within educational levels of the state. For example, in recent years the activity of the higher education as well as secondary and elementary levels of education within the state have greatly increased due to increased competition for available state monies. As state aid proportions grow, elementary and secondary education competes for the same dollars as higher education.

Another barrier to SEA improvement often results from fears of the local education agency of control superimposed by the state board of the SEA. The SEA reasoning is that state level control will be a contingency of receipt of state funds. The SEA is seen as the police agency because of its regulatory and supervisory functions, and, therefore, is handicapped in exerting the leadership it should.

Reliance on federal monies by state education agencies also adds another barrier to the SEA's improvement. As it stands now, the reliance is too heavy on federal funding and could be partially remedied by hiring personnel on an as-needed basis and thereby reducing SEA staff size. "Stud fees are cheaper than stable fees" was his way of arguing for short term and consultant services as opposed to adding permanent staff. Tension between the various state agencies was cited as another barrier to SEA's. As an example, friction oftentimes exists between the SEA and the governor's office. This stems from the large chunk of state monies the SEA receives and the relatively small amount of control the governor's office has over the allocation and expenditures of those funds by the SEA. This barrier becomes more pronounced each year.

An additional barrier to SEA improvement and leadership is the politics of education. This is an increasingly important and significant area of concern in education. In relation to the SEA, Hansen restricted his comments to the political happenings between the SEA and its governing board. Such maneuvering occurs most frequently over staff and budget restrictions.

Finally, one of the most significant barriers before the state education agency is that of the public perceptions of the SEA and the self-image the SEA has of itself. Too often the public sees the SEA as simply another large bureaucracy. Making matters worse is the fact that the state education agency frequently perceives itself as a second-rate agency.

4. The Role and Relationship of the State Board of Education and the State Education Agency

Hansen noted that existence as well as the need for "constructive tension" between the SEA and the SBE. This "constructive tension" is

created by the line between policy (SBE function) and administration (SEA function). The definition of this line is dependent upon two contingencies:

1. the openness and communicativeness of the SBE and SEA, and

2. the realization on the part of the SBE that it has control over plan approval, not plan design, and evaluation of the SEA job performance.

Hansen emphasized that the SBE needs to realize and adhere to its area of control. If this is done, the roles of both the SBE and SEA will be defined as well as their mutual relationships.

After Hansen's concluding remarks, there was a reaction and question session. Remarks at this time reflected the concerns to be discussed in small groups. Participants expressed interest primarily in three areas mentioned by Hansen. These were: (1) reducing the SEA staff size, (2) improving the SEA/SBE public and self-image, and (3) development of an educational-legislative coalition. After Hansen's remarks, participants broke into small groups to discuss the seminar topic and formulate suggestions relative thereto. The following is a listing of the suggestions made in small groups by participants.

Suggestions regarding state board of education:

- Broaden board involvement in legislative studies related to education.

- Seek inclusion on Nebraska School Boards Association's executive committee.

- Better communications with public school administrators throughout the state, with particular emphasis on informing locals of new legislation.

- Develop more of a voice in postsecondary education and especially in technical community colleges.

- Develop more of a directive role of educational service unit (intermediate units).

- Reports to the legislature on the implementation of legislation and needed legislation.

- Have a full-time representative for the board and the commissioner before legislature and Congress.

- Devote more attention to the coordination of postsecondary education.

- Delineate more carefully between SBE functions or SEA functions.

Suggestions regarding state department of education:

- Enhance the teacher education function by disseminating information of programs operating in the state that are of high interest.

- Fulfill more of a leadership role by:
  - initiating legislative proposals and recommending same to SBE,
  - encouraging local districts to initiate legislative proposals.

- Develop a salary schedule which would make salaries of department personnel commensurate to responsibilities.

- Evaluate and inform local districts of the direction of their programs.

- Provide for statewide programs that take into account the mobility and competition students must face the world.

- Disseminate information to the state in lay language.

- Initiate the creation of a legislative coalition for education in the state.

- Be more willing to take risks, to admit failure and to offer constructive alternatives.

- Consider the reduction of regulatory action for private schools.

- Eliminate the "approval" of public schools and allow only accredited public schools to operate (i.e., reduce regulatory function).

- Make greater use of personnel on an "as needed" basis (stud fees instead of stable fees).

- Refine SBE agendas to maximize use of SBE meeting time.

Dr. Ron Smith of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) offered a reaction to and summary of the day's events at the close of the second NES. In his remarks Smith reviewed the purpose of ECS and noted that it is analogous to NES but on a nationwide basis.

In his summary Smith noted that the SEA should exist to serve, coordinate and regulate. It should be an initiator in regard to such areas as program, leadership, evaluation, and finance.

Relative to the state board of education Smith emphasized the following points: (1) the most important job of the SBE is the selection of the chief executive officer for state education; (2) the SBE must define its purpose and values in order to help it govern; (3) it must also make an effort to define and adhere to the line between policy and administration; and (4) finally, the SBE must communicate its purpose and decisions to the state's education community.

Smith closed by emphasizing and challenging educators and those involved with education in the state to become more politically aware and involved in order to direct educational decisions in a common, qualitative direction.

CURRENT STATUS: THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The role of the State Board of Education is clearly defined by the Constitution and statute in Nebraska. The Board is supposed to determine educational policies for the state while the Department is expected to implement these policies. To properly analyze the performance of the State Department, it is necessary to examine the four functions it serves as identified by Hansen: regulation, supervision, service, and leadership. In the area of regulation, the Department is doing an excellent job. Considering the resources available, the State is making a Herculean effort to fulfill its supervisory responsibility. In the area of service, there is a wide disparity within the separate units of the Department. The service function is dependent to a large degree upon the availability of funds and may be restricted either by federal involvement or the specific designation of this function to the educational service unit. One of the major difficulties is that the relationship of the educational service unit with the State Department needs to be further defined by statute. Because of the degree of variance of service among the various subsections of the Department, it is difficult for the Department to assume and maintain a strong leadership role throughout the state.

According to statute, it is intended that the Commissioner be the educational leader of the state. However, there are many forces which tend to reduce the Commissioner's effectiveness in that vital responsibility. Probably most important is the large number of local districts in Nebraska and the underlying pressure for local control. Another factor is that by law the Commissioner can only implement the policies adopted by the Board. Since funding is such a vital aspect, the Legislature also exerts a major influence upon the educational system. Another influence is the influx of federal monies which contribute substantially to the Department budget and are usually accompanied with restrictions and requirements.

There is a clear need for the Department to increase its role in education leadership in Nebraska. The need for unified statewide leadership is apparent. However, the problems of state funding, reorganization, the role of the county superintendent, and the relationship of the educational service unit with the State Department must all be resolved before the Department and the Commissioner may exert the strong leadership role envisioned by statute.

References: Nebraska Constitution, Article 7; Nebraska Revised Statutes, §79-321 to 332; Rules and Regulations of State Department of Education; Nebraska Educational Directory; NES seminars, discussions, and reports; Collegium IV; and selected interviews.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Section 2, Article VII, of the Constitution of the State of Nebraska directs that the State Department of Education, comprised of a State Board of Education and a Commissioner of Education, shall have general supervision and administration of the school system of the state and of such other activities as the Legislature may direct. Numerous legislated directives appear in the Revised Statutes of Nebraska.

Rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education direct the Commissioner, its executive officer, in the manner in which statutory provisions are to be executed. It is evident that little latitude for general supervision and administration by the State Board exists. Specific legislative mandates prevail in most instances. Powers and duties of the Commissioner of Education, as stated in Section 79-332 of Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943, are stated in terms conducive to "general supervision and administration of the state school system" under the auspices of an elected state board.

However, other statutory provisions and legislative budget direction tend to limit the Board's discretion in carrying out these service functions of the Department.

Research, experimentation, and evaluation of school programs and activities directed toward a more efficient and effective delivery of learning experiences to citizens in the state become seriously limited prerogatives of the Board and Commissioner unless budgetary discretion is granted by the Legislature for these purposes.

Presently the aggregate task prescribed by statutes, rules, and regulations exceeds the capacity to perform.

Development of long-range goals which favor the service role over regulation and supervision best indicates the projected direction of the Department of Education. Less reliance on federal funds for state functions is a needed outcome, e.g., data processing, evaluation of local programs, assistance in local curriculum development and implementation. Greater emphasis on contracted services from colleges, universities, and other agencies for assisting local schools as opposed to additional staff is indicated.

The future direction of the Department of Education should be the "general supervision and administration of the schools of the state financed through general appropriations of the Legislature." Policies of the Board of Education implemented through rules and regulations of the Board should replace legislative mandates on numerous specific educational functions. Maximum utilization of personnel toward the end result of efficient organization of district programs for effective learning opportunities is paramount.

The State Department must carefully determine the role of the public schools, then request funding which provides quality learning experiences in all areas identified as being tasks of the public schools.

Schools should be organized in such a manner that maximizes efficiency while embracing changing technologies and human needs. Equity in educational opportunity for citizens of the state is a responsibility of the State Department of Education.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, John Tate, Labor Relations Attorney, Lincoln, Nebraska; and Frank Williams, Senior Vice-President, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, Omaha, Nebraska

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Collective bargaining--who wins at the bargaining table? Pros and cons of this process are discussed by two analysts from law and the corporate world.

Tate's initial points drew into historical perspective the negotiation process. The National Labor Relations Act sanctioned trade and labor unions and encouraged collective bargaining. Early contracts which were the results of management-labor negotiations were generally short in duration; seldom more than one year in length. In the early 1940's, the National Labor Relations Board began to recognize two-year contracts. The rationale behind extended contractural periods was that the negotiation process was often lengthy and always emotionally upsetting, thus longer contracts necessitated fewer bargaining sessions. Most labor contracts outside of education today are three-year agreements. Tate was of the opinion that this arrangement was preferable to the one- or two-year contract and expressed disappointment in the fact that education had not followed the lead of private business.

Tate sees the existing divisions between labor and management not as a by-product of negotiations but as an effect of management's domination of the decisionmaking process. He suggested that executive personnel are negligent in their resource function and pointed to Japanese industry as a good example of team or participatory management. Unless all facets of the corporate structure are involved in action determination, this gap will not be eliminated.

Education has a unique problem in this area as the courts have specifically delineated the prerogatives of governing boards. Policy issues involving such things as class size and curricular offerings are looked on as exclusively within the realm of management. In Tate's opinion this creates serious division in that problems become "mine" or "theirs" rather than "ours."

Typically negotiations in education have taken one of three routes: agreement between the two interests; impasse with recommended resolution from an impartial third party; or determination by a judicial body--in Nebraska the Court of Industrial Relations. Tate believes that the third alternative was the least palatable and that courts should not decide the dollar value of someone's services.

Teacher salaries, according to Tate, should be determined by the competitive free market. Wages should not depend upon negotiated scales with standard increments based on experience or professional preparation. An alternative situation suggested by the speaker would have instructional personnel evaluated against established objectives with salary dependent on performance.

For years Frank Williams served as executive director and chief negotiator for the Omaha Education Association. Williams feels that collective bargaining has been forced on school districts by a number of factors. First, poor judgment and a paternalistic attitude on the part of many school administrators have caused the unrest which eventually spawned negotiations. School executives tend to create insulating bureaucracies thereby making them unavailable to instructional personnel. Williams feels that many school administrators lack the managerial, technical, or social skills essential to their position.

Governing boards force collective bargaining to some extent in that they are generally supportive of administrators and the decisions they make. Williams does not, however, hold them responsible to the same degree as upper echelon administrators.

To a lesser extent, state legislatures have forced collective bargaining. The speaker noted that often educational interests are divided in their lobbying efforts causing lawmakers to react negatively to proposed education measures. This division, in turn, is often the result of a failure on higher education's part to provide problem-solving techniques that incorporate the energies of all facets of the educational community.

The growing militancy of teacher organizations in light of the aforementioned factors is only natural, according to Williams. Though criticism has resulted from this pro-union posture of a "professional" group, many advantages to the negotiations process exist.

Collective bargaining generally forces communication among educational interests and facilitates the identification of priorities on the part of the community and the staff. The negotiations process contributes to change and breeds constructive innovation, according to Williams, and helps point out areas of management incompetence and teacher accountability. Finally, Williams holds that collective bargaining contributes to an espirit de corps among teacher ranks and forces a participative management pattern which encourages system loyalty.

Following the presentations, NES participants raised issues and questioned the speakers. One concern expressed involved the disadvantages of collective bargaining. Tate made the following responses: Negotiations tend to divide the educational force and cause the public to question its motivation. Collective bargaining discourages true equality in wage rates in that lock-step schedules fail to recognize quality of performance. Tate feels that the educational dollars are unfairly distributed due to the negotiations process as little attention is paid to the outstanding service of some teachers and the incompetence of others.

Williams disagreed with most of the points Tate made and argued that teachers' salaries have gone up as a result of negotiations and that teachers have more rights now than at any other time in the history of the profession.

Additional questions that were discussed included:

1. Do teachers really gain from bargaining sessions or are "benefits" merely salary that has been dislocated?

2. Will competition determine salary base in the teaching profession?

3. Is the management by objective approach to organizational operation applicable to teacher evaluation?

CURRENT STATUS: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining in Nebraska is clearly here to stay. Each year more school districts enter into negotiations. While there is discussion of the possibility of federal legislation authorizing collective bargaining in the public sector, the authority in Nebraska is based upon statute and the rulings of the Court of Industrial Relations and the Nebraska Supreme Court. A look at the docket of the Court of Industrial Relations is a clear indication that the Court is increasingly being asked to resolve school district disputes. At present, the State Department of Education has not entered into the collective bargaining arena. In postsecondary education, the decision whether to enter into the negotiations process formally is unresolved with UN-L having declined while other bargaining units are now seeking recognition.

Because of this out-of-state influence, many reservations concerning collective bargaining are currently being voiced at the district level. Negative concerns which are expressed include: that collective bargaining must necessarily lead to an increase in budgets, that it will create an adversary relationship, that there will be a possible loss of public support for education, and that collective bargaining removes the authority and decisionmaking from the local school board and instead places it either upon an arbitrator or the Court of Industrial Relations. Two recent decisions of the Nebraska Supreme Court are of importance in this area. One emphasized the comparability aspect of the Nebraska law while the other determined that "the ability to pay" is not a factor which the Court of Industrial Relations may consider in arriving at its decision. Both decisions raised critical questions as financial constraints and budget limitations become an ever-increasing reality.

References: Nebraska Revised Statutes §79-187 to 1295; NES seminars and reports; Collegium V; Nebraska Public School Finance Study; selected interviews; Nebraska City Education Association v.

School District of Nebraska City, 201 Neb. 303 (1978); and Lincoln Firefighter Association v. City of Lincoln, 198 Neb. 174 (1977).

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining is working well in the K-12 public schools. The past ten years have produced some sophisticated bargainers for both the associations and the school districts. Only five or six bargaining cases per year are being taken to the Court of Industrial Relations, an indication that bargaining teams are reaching decisions at the local level. In other parts of the public sector, similar success at the local level is not being achieved. This may be caused by a lack of experience and training in the bargaining processes. The K-12 public schools were the first in Nebraska and other political subdivisions are only recently using the procedures established for bargaining. Some who object to the bargaining results in these political subdivisions are attacking the entire process.

The current attacks on bargaining are being focused on the Court of Industrial Relations. Unless cities, counties, etc., can make the bargaining processes work, the attacks will continue. I think we can expect further attempts to have legislative changes which will weaken the Court. At least, this seems to be the strategy. I am not familiar with many who are advocating the repeal of bargaining legislation, only of those who wish to weaken the process.

Some legislation could be prepared to make the bargaining processes more efficient. The Court could use more financial support and could be granted some additional powers to order more effective and prompt bargaining at the local level.

We must continue to monitor the effects of bargaining or lack of bargaining in other states. Public employees in the United States are going to be heard. Strength for a federal law for bargaining in the public sector is going to continue to increase. Legislation will be demanded to provide some rational process for solving disputes. We must monitor the movement to see that the federal legislation permits the people of Nebraska to have bargaining procedures which fit the value structures of Nebraskans. Most people I know wish to maintain some type of final binding arbitration or Court settlement. They are not interested in closing the schools with strikes, walkouts, etc. School boards and associations recognize that they sit on the opposite sides of the table on the issues which are bargained, and they also recognize that they sit on the same side of the table on countless other educational issues such as state aid to schools. This is not true in many states like Wisconsin, Ohio, etc.

I hear no one in the associations who take John Tate's position very seriously. Merit pay plans, the latest were suggested by differentiated staffing and performance contracting, have been proposed throughout the 20th Century. Such pay plans have not worked well and have led to internal conflicts in the schools. Lincoln had the problem after World War II. Unless the pay scales for school teachers can be increased remarkably, years-of-experience and preparation-pay schedules will continue as the most rational plan.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION, Arthur E. Wise, Education Policy Research Institute, Princeton, New Jersey

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Competency-based education is a hot topic nationwide. Many politicians and citizens seem convinced that the only way to improve public education is to install competency-based programs at all levels of education. Dr. Arthur Wise elucidates the dangers involved in that simplistic notion.

What Is Competency-Based Education?

Competency-based education is a movement that advocates the development of programs and competencies that every child should have. These competencies should emanate from objectives that have been developed and made known to the general public. The objectives should be explicit enough to allow for the measurement of pupil performances in terms of competencies.

The implications of the movement are that educational programs can be measured and evaluated against specific criteria. This ideal has a strong appeal to a cost conscious general public.

Competency-Based Education and Minimal Competency Testing

Minimal competency testing is a newer term used to refer to competency-based education. The primary difference between the two is that those seeking competency-based education programs under the newer label of minimal competency testing are defining the educational objectives that need to be measured as constituting the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Through the measurement of these narrow objectives, it is argued that pupil performances and educational programs can be adequately measured.

These movements are seeking state legislated programs that would be administered through the state departments of education.

Accountability and Education

The concept of competency-based education has evolved from the need for accountability in education. Attempts have been made to apply accountability concepts to education and to measure performance, but these efforts have been too short sighted and narrow in focus. There has been a lack of a theory of education behind these efforts, which has caused them to ignore the fundamental problems of education. Money and effort have been expended

which will probably cause more problems than the ones that these efforts are aimed at redressing.

Wise believed that the fundamental problems of education are few. They involve improving the behavior patterns and performances of a minority of students and teachers. He does not feel that accountability legislation such as competency-based education will allow for the resolution of those problems.

The Danger of Competency-Based Education

Rather than allowing education to define a high school diploma in measurable terms, the competency-based education movement has the danger of causing states to mandate unwittingly a reorientation of the curriculum that will change the character of education, without increasing the number of high school graduates who can read and write, or redressing the fundamental problems of education. The reorienting of the curriculum to focus on passing state mandated tests will do nothing to solve the fundamental problems of education which are improving the behavior and performance of a minority of students and teachers.

Implementation of a competency-based education program will cause a centralization of education within a state. With state mandated and administered testing programs, educators will be forced to become more bureaucratic, and the locus of education will shift from the local level to the state level.

Summary

Wise was opposed to mandating competency-based education programs. He feels that these programs will not solve the fundamental problems of education which are improving the behavior and performance of a minority of students and teachers. Accountability programs such as competency-based education have the danger of shifting the locus of education from the local level to the state level. The local level is the most appropriate level for solving educational problems and developing educational problems.

Salient Questions/Comments

1. Statewide testing allows one to compare school districts. What good is statewide testing when you have so many different educational programs in a state?

2. State legislatures and state departments of education should decide what they are going to do with the testing data before they mandate the testing programs.

3. Is there a conflict inherent in the federal government's desire for equal educational opportunity and the authority of local boards of education to create educational programs?

4. When you have one body setting goals for another body to accomplish, you have divorced authority from responsibility in a way that is fundamentally unhealthy.

5. How can state officials evaluate whether quality education is being achieved by the local districts?

6. State officials can best evaluate the performances of the local districts by defining quality education for their state and then allowing the local districts to educate within those parameters.

CURRENT STATUS: COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

The pressure for a competency-based education is being felt in Nebraska just as it is being experienced throughout the nation. Curricula and teaching techniques are both being adapted to the demands of competency-based education. Criterion-based minimum competency tests are a clear indication of the emphasis upon competency-based education. While at present there is no federal legislation requiring minimum competency-based tests, there are various Title programs which utilize these tests. Nebraska statutes provide that the State Board of Education may require statewide testing and it is at the State Department of Education that impetus for competency-based tests is evident.

Presently Rule 14-2 and Rule 14-50 provide for minimum competency tests in both the elementary and secondary schools. The proposed change in Rule 11 which will alter accreditation standards changes the tests that are required to be administered by guidance departments from ability and achievement tests to criterion-based minimum competency tests. In the area of adult education, 957 minimum competencies have been identified, and the State Department is undertaking pilot programs to validate them. The problem is that while the state requires testing, that is all that is required. There are no sanctions applied to the student who does not achieve the minimum level, no one is automatically failed, no graduation is denied. The State Department does not even require that the same test be used throughout the state. Nebraska is clearly not ready to adopt the Oregon position, nor accept a program similar to the New York Regents Exam.

At the district level only Omaha Westside has made the achievement of minimum competencies a prerequisite for graduation. If students are retained because of poor performance, districts may use the tests as justification, but in Nebraska this retention is not mandatory. Presumably this reflects upon the parochialism of Nebraska and the local district orientation. The underlying concept seems to be that what is

good for Ogallala may not necessarily be good for Omaha. Until a convincing argument is presented to refute this contention, it is doubtful that a statewide competency test will be developed or adopted; and if a statewide competency test is, it will necessarily be very basic. The only indication at present is the attempt to make private schools achieve average or above average performance when compared with public schools.

References: Nebraska Revised Statutes §79-328 5(d); legislation proposed by Rumery; NES seminars, discussion, and reports; Collegium IV and V; Rules and Regulations of State Department of Education; selected personal interviews; and CBS White Paper, "Is Anybody Out There Learning."

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

A common problem in the written and spoken words of educators is a failure to describe the assumptions being made and to define the terms being used. Multiple examples of these weaknesses are apparent in Wise's comments about competency-based education.

Wise apparently equates, or confuses, competency-based education with numerous issues present in American education, including accountability, the "back-to-the-basics" movement, minimal competency testing, the rethinking of educational purposes, and issues of local vs. state control of education. Despite these weaknesses, he correctly notes that the current bandwagon appeal of the "competency-based education" movement may lead to "a reorientation of the curriculum that will change the character of education without . . . redressing the fundamental problems of education."

In the remainder of this response to Wise's presentation to the Nebraska Education Seminar, attention is directed to: (1) definitions, (2) assumptions, (3) conclusions drawn from the definitions or assumptions given, and (4) an analysis of the current status of competency-based education in Nebraska.

The Problem of Definition

Since 1967, American education has been enthralled by the bandwagon appeal of "competency-based education." The movement began in teacher education and considerable effort was expended in the development of "performance-based teacher education" (PBTE) and "competency-based teacher education" (CBTE) programs. In operation, both in teacher preparation programs and in the current movement for "competency" testing or requiring "competencies" for graduation, educators have equated "performance" with "competency."

The distinction between "performance-based" and "competency-based" education is not a false issue. As Doll noted, educators equated the two terms just after the linguists had clearly distinguished between competency and performance.[1] And Popham, sometimes referred to as the "father" of behavioral objectives, has noted that "we have precious few educational systems that are truly competency-based."[2] Other authors have also suggested that competency-based education (CBE) remains an ideal.[3]

Education is performance-based when there is a clear statement of objectives which are to be met and knowledge which is to be gained and when the learner's performance is judged according to the attainment of specified objectives. This is, operationally, the level at which so-called "CBE" programs currently exist.

In contrast to performance, in which the concern is directed toward measuring what a person knows or can do at a given point in time, questions of competence relate to the value placed by the individual and others on knowledge or skill and can only be measured over an extended period of time. Competence derives from the same Latin root as compete. Unlike performance-based education in which a person is evaluated as to whether or not the required knowledge or skill was present at a single point in time, a person is not "competent" because of what he knows, does, or feels; he is competent when what he knows, does, or feels is evaluated as being positive in its results and is part of his consistent behavior as a human being.

In the current bandwagon movement toward "minimal competency testing" and the establishment of "competencies" for graduation, the actual concern is on whether or not certain bodies of knowledge and skill can and should be specified for promotion within educational programs and for completion of educational programs. Thus, the concern is for the establishment of "performance" standards and this movement, almost exclusively, is a movement toward performance-based education. There is a sparsity of research which clearly demonstrates a linkage between performance levels and long-range competence. The specification of levels of knowledge or skill to be shown are based on assumptions that the required levels may contribute to future competency by learners. Realistically, educational institutions

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[1]Ronald Doll, Chapter 5 in Molnar and Azhorik, editors, Curriculum Theory (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1977).

[2]James W. Popham, "A Competency-Based High School Completion Program," NASSP Bulletin, February, 1978, pp. 101-105.

[3]See Benjamin Rosner, ed., The Power of Competency-Based Teacher Education: A Report (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1972); and Edgar A. Kelley, Three Views of Competency-Based Teacher Education: III: The University of Nebraska (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1974).

should avoid promising, or appearing to promise, that attainment of a particular body of knowledge or a particular skill will, indeed, lead to the person being competent in future roles.

A more important issue is the need to remember that we do not have any known advocates for incompetency, i.e., within the society and among educators, citizens, and students, there are no known examples of persons seeking to become less skilled and less competent.

Assumptions

Space will not permit a complete discussion of the various and, at times, conflicting assumptions which characterize the so-called CBE movement. In my judgment, there are a number of positive and negative assumptions.

Some positive assumptions include:

1. The effectiveness of the educational process can be improved by specification of objectives to be attained.

2. The specification of educational objectives can improve the use of diagnostic procedures for designing learning experiences for students.

3. The specification of educational objectives can improve the effectiveness of reporting of educational progress.

To the extent that these assumptions are translated into practice, the "minimum competency" movement will be of value to schools and school districts.

Other assumptions which are made, and which are questionable, include:

1. Establishment of required performance standards for promotion or for graduation will make education more "meaningful." This is not a proven outcome and is questionable as either a promise or an expectation. Regardless of the standards set or met, it seems likely that one-half the population will be in the upper half. It also seems probable that the high school diploma has lost, permanently, the role of "selection" which it once served in our society.

2. There is some knowable, and known, body of knowledge and level of knowledge or skill attainment which is "essential" for all students. This is a dangerous assumption in a twofold manner. First, it assumes the desirability of a level of uniformity in American education which is counter to past traditions. Secondly, it assumes that "performance" at one point in time can be predictive of "competency" as an adult and as a citizen. Both assumptions are questionable. To adopt these, schools run the risk of

widening the gap between what is attained by schools and what is expected by the public. Schools can be accountable for reporting progress in performance; schools cannot guarantee or predict competence.

Some Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the discussion provided thus far, the following conclusions and recommendations are presented:

1. Continued attention should be given to the specification of objectives for learning programs and learning activities.

2. Data on learner performance--both individuals and groups--should be used to diagnose, plan, deliver, and evaluate appropriate instruction.

3. Attention should be given to improving methods of reporting the educational progress of both individuals and groups.

4. Attention should be given to identifying linkages between levels of knowledge or skill attained and subsequent competence within the society--but, until such linkages are more clearly known than at present, schools should avoid promising, or appearing to promise, that a particular level of knowledge or skill is equal to "competency."

5. Information should be made available to the public regarding known linkages between basic skill attainment, e.g., reading skills, and readiness for further educational training or for careers. Efforts should be made, however, to avoid establishing single levels of attainment and implying that these levels equal "competency."

In essence, the crucial issue is whether or not data about student performance are used to diagnose and plan for student needs, to report to students and parents on progress, and to permit the student and his parents to compare progress made to aspiration and expectation levels or, instead, whether such data will be used to make judgments about both learners and schools--when the data are inaccurate as a base for such judgments.

CBE in Nebraska

Many of the elements of performance-based education have been implemented in Nebraska; a discussion of many approaches which have been used appeared in the September, 1977 issue of Catalyst, the journal of the

Nebraska Council of School Administrators.[4] All of these efforts contain a concern for the improvement of instruction, the improvement of diagnostic-prescriptive approaches to education, the more careful specification of educational objectives, and a recognition of a need for improved reporting of educational attainment to pupils, their parents, and to agencies involved with the pupil after graduation, including institutions of higher education and employers. Some of these efforts, unfortunately, are wrapped in the myth that attainment of specific skills is so clearly linked to competency that such items should be used to determine whether or not a student graduates from high school. Most schools have avoided this error.

In Nebraska, there is a general antipathy toward establishment of state standards for "competency" or state standards for "competency" levels to be met for graduation. As Wise noted, and I would concur, this is a healthy frame of reference. The local level remains the most appropriate level for identifying, addressing, assessing, and reporting on educational plans and programs. Within larger districts, the most appropriate level is the school attendance area.

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[4]"Minimum Competencies for Graduation: Fact, Fad, Fantasy, or Future?" Catalyst, Volume 1, Number 1 (September, 1977). (This thematic issue explores the status of minimal competency testing and the establishment of competency standards for graduation from high school on both a national and Nebraska level.)

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PROCESSES/PROGRAMS,
Jack Minzey, Coordinator of Community Education, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan

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The Feds are rapidly becoming interested in the subject of community education. Idealists view community education as an idea whose time has come; front-line school administrators sometimes view community education as an idea whose time has come--and gone. Dr. Jack Minzey provides insight into the real potential offered by community education as a process.

Community Education--On the Move

Minzey proclaimed that the past five to eight years have been very exciting for him in that community education has really started to "catch on" in the country. It was his position that community education is the fastest growing concept in the United States. He underscored this statement with the following observations:

- Five years ago there were only seven centers for community education in university settings around the country. In 1976 there are in excess of one hundred centers.

- There are currently six states with community education legislation on the books, and six more with statutory mandates in the offing.

- In the State of Michigan there were only seven school districts with community education in 1970. Today there are 110 school districts with such programs.

- In 1976 across the United States 900 plus school districts have community education and over 5,000 buildings are involved almost daily.

- The federal government passed legislation in 1975 which allowed for 3½ million dollars for community education grants to local agencies. As of September 17, 1976, 48 new school districts around the country will have new or expanded community education due to federal funding.

- There are now 32 states, with SDE (or its equivalent) positions in community education, due to federal funding. At least 13 institutions of higher education will employ new community education professionals to "propagate the word."

Educators Reinvent the Wheel

Minzey asked the seminar participants to erase from their minds whatever presumptions, perceptions, or previous experiences they had had with community education because he was confident that community education has changed dramatically in the last six or seven years. He stated that a number of people have worked in community education for a lot of years, and that community education is not as "new" as some would like to believe (i.e., Nebraska Project with Beggs, Hayes, Phelps).

Minzey succinctly defined change and growth in education as "going in circles." It was his belief that one only has to live long enough to see the same idea in education surface, fade, and resurface a number of times--community education being no exception. He cited several examples of the historical "circular" flow of key education platforms: self-contained classrooms, specialized teachers/consultants, library/media center, ad infinitum.

He noted other "discoveries" of new education approaches. The 1930's witnessed a strong thrust in vocational preparation for high school students, then faded in the late 1940's, only to be rediscovered in the 1960's and 70's in the form of career education, industrial arts, cooperative education, vocational education, technical education, etc. Minzey's thesis was that he didn't want the participants to be left with the idea that community education is a brand new idea.

He briefly covered the field of major contributors to community education from the early 1930's on: See, Olson, Johnson, Mott, Bush, Parker, Melby, and many others. He traced specifically the "Flint Story," of Flint, Michigan, a city which wanted to decrease its juvenile delinquency and give kids something to do (recreation) when they were not in school. The Flint Schools have now moved to a superintendent of community education because <u>all</u> of the Flint Schools now operate under the community education philosophy and model.

Minzey described the dotted line (in a school district's administrative hierarchy) relationship (no commitment by school district) which many community education programs tolerate in public schools vs. the solid line, from the superintendent down relationship, which exists for community education in the Flint Schools.

Community Education--What the Schools Should Be About

Minzey held the Flint community education model high, not as the panacea, but as an example of what community education can mean to the people of a school district. He stated that in Flint the purpose of the school is to make all individuals the best they are capable of becoming. Administratively, the principal of each attendance unit is, in fact, a director of community education. He noted that making a school a community education operation does not preclude the school fulfilling its "traditional" role, that of educating students K-12. The difference in the

community education model vs. the traditional model is clear, the community education model would help determine: (1) the needs (social, economic, educational, recreational) of the community; and (2) the relationship between school facilities, resources, personnel, and the needs identified by the community.

Minzey cited statistics from a recent study on utilization of public school facilities to demonstrate the futility of our current narrow philosophy of education:

- School buildings were used only 11 percent of their clock-hour time.
- The district didn't have one elementary school building that was used 1 percent of its potential clock-hour time.
- Libraries were used .75 or 3/4 of 1 percent of potential clock-hour time.

It was Minzey's contention that tremendous waste exists in use of community facilities (schools, boys' clubs, etc.) in terms of potential community-wide usage. He stated that each organization builds its own "little empire," and then sits on it! In conjunction with this, he stated unequivocally that education needs to move from architectural building specifications to community education building specifications. He contended that facilities need to be planned and built based upon the complete needs of a community. This type of planning by its very nature might dictate a health service room, a dental chair, a senior citizens room, a social welfare room, a local library, etc. He felt that the new definition of an education building should be that of a community center, which could sometimes be used for education of children, but would always be used to meet the community's broadly defined needs.

Declining Test Scores and Community Education

Minzey discussed the knowledge explosion (a la Toffler) and set forth the thesis that a basic reason for declining achievement test scores rests with the fact that students are required to attend school on a reduced timeline. He noted that when he was a principal, 201 days of school attendance were required. He further noted that through collective bargaining the number of days has been reduced to 180. The school day itself has been reduced from 7 hours to 5½ hours; the educators and the students have lost, conservatively, three school months in any given school year. Minzey stated that the idea that a child must and can learn all that is expected, cannot be learned in the current artificially imposed "school day." He posed several key questions with regard to this topic: (1) Why not learn before school? (2) Why not learn after school? (3) Why not learn on the weekends? (4) Why not learn in the summer? He noted that we can get children involved in learning outside traditional hours, if we can conceptualize it as a possibility! Minzey's thesis was that we need to give children and the community more time and more options for learning, and this can be done utilizing the community education philosophy.

Community Education--A Local Need

In defining the education needs of a community, Minzey proposed that the following audiences be served as fully as possible by the schools:

1. Traditional students K-12
2. Post high school students
3. The aged
4. All others interested in continued, life-long learning.

He noted that 22 percent of all Americans are functional illiterates, and that it is just as important for an adult to attain a high school diploma as it is for the current high school student.

It was Minzey's belief that if educators are to "succeed" with children in schools, they will be compelled to get involved with the family at home. He stated that there have been many blue-ribbon committees making school recommendations city-wide, but that such committees rule out the possibility of local neighborhood attendance area people becoming involved in the establishment of education priorities.

Minzey cited the Flint system as an example of "local input." In Flint, every elementary school building has a community council that deals with all problems of the community, not just school-related problems. This approach activates the process of getting community members to exercise the power they already have; the power to vote, to interact, to recall, to petition, and to make decisions.

The Future of Community Education--Power Broker for Education Services

(Team Salient Points)

Minzey shared Eric Hoffer's definition of the future political unit in America: "Political activity won't take place in a county, a parish, or a city, but through the local school district." He quoted Mario Fantani in saying that "I see us building on the roles and strengths of the public schools."

In terms of the role community education can play in the general life of all Americans, Minzey had this to say:

> "The community with its school staff would identify the problems of the community, and they would then identify the resources needed to meet the problems. If the problems are recreation, continuing education, health services, social services, or whatever, then the agencies providing these services would do so under the

auspices of the community school. The community school would serve as a broker to pull each of these services together, so that one is the system and one is the service."

Minzey depicted the community school as a system organized to: (1) identify problems of the community, (2) coordinate resources with problems, and (3) generate new resources to meet problems where resources do not currently exist.

CURRENT STATUS: COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PROCESSES/PROGRAMS

Community education is a concept which in Nebraska receives great vocal support and very little else. Last year the State Department of Education allocated no funds for community education; however, it did demonstrate a willingness to match federal funds but the proposal was not accepted. When the Commissioner took office, she considered community education to be a high priority item; however, it has not been treated as such by the State Board of Education. At present there is an infinitesimally small amount of funding, and what is available is provided by the local district.

Another problem facing community education is obtaining agreement on what community education means or consists of. Respected authorities in the state differ to such a degree that when asked how many programs are in existence the answers varied from four to fifteen, with some educators even implying that there are nearly eighty programs. Clearly if the concept is this vague or ambiguous to its proponents, it is quite understandable why the citizenry does not understand and embrace it. Underlying the confusion is a basic philosophical difference concerning whether the initial emphasis should be placed upon programs or process. Furthermore, various involved interest groups have conflicting interests in the development of the community education concept. The bottom line is that in Nebraska community education is now floundering and that due to low placement on various priority lists and a severe lack of funding, it is in danger of going under for the third time if budget constraints require curtailment of programs.

References: Nebraska Revised Statutes §79-1415 to 1419 (this applies only to Adult Education component); NES seminars, reports, and discussions; and University and State Department personnel.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PROCESSES/PROGRAMS

I would like to begin with my definition of community education. I believe this is necessary before I can speak to the points in your communique. As I speak in terms of community education I mean "community education as the process that achieves the balance and use of all institutional forces and resources in the community for the education of the people of the community."

Based upon this definition, the current status of community education in Nebraska is virtually non-existent. On a continuum from one to ten with ten being high, I would place the current status of community education at about two.

I do not mean to say that nothing is being done in this area as we do have a considerable amount of community school activity. We do not, however, have what I consider to be a process within the community education program. I believe I can say it best by asking the question, "Where is the 'community' in our community education?"

Most of what is called community education in the State of Nebraska is adult education and has been in existence for many years. The community colleges have added to these programs so more adults are being served, but it still remains adult education under a new rubric.

As to the future direction of community education in the State of Nebraska, the State Board is considering at this time a position paper on community education. It is my opinion that this should be the direction of community education in our state. It is my opinion that community education in our state will move in the direction of process. I believe it will be based upon the local community using advisory committees and citizen participation to determine the needs and wants of the local community. The philosophy paper emphasizes process, balance and use of all of the agencies and resources for education of all of the people toward the education of all. It is my opinion that the future direction of community education should go this way in the State of Nebraska.

I think it is also important that those forces in the state working toward community education, regardless of definition at present, should provide a workable definition, moving toward a workable model and then initiate an emphasis on community education. It appears to me that we are going in too many different directions, with most of the emphasis being placed on program rather than process.

A strong indication I see in the "Community Education Program" is too much of what I call turfsmanship. This is based upon competition. If we can conceive of community education as process rather than program, it is my opinion that we could eliminate the threat of competition from the various educational agencies, as well as other agencies. Process emphasizes needs assessment, involvement of people, coordination, which recognizes the

existence of all agencies that have legitimate educational aims. It could lead to the determination of needed educational programs and toward the recognition of those agencies that should be responsible for the different programs. Should there not be an agency that is willing to conduct the program that is needed, then of course there would be the need to sponsor that activity through some other agency. It appears that we have too much competition within the State of Nebraska because we have community programs rather than a process of community education.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: COMMUNITY EDUCATION, PROCESSES/PROGRAMS

Nebraska has about a dozen school districts operating community education programs with a director of community education employed half-time or more. Several of these districts coordinate recreation programs with city support as well as the support they receive from the school district. Nearly half of the present community education districts currently operating have a consortium arrangement with their area community college. An advisory council consisting of twelve or more citizens normally exists in each of these districts which assists in determining needs and priorities which will be served. Every effort is made to develop ever increasing cooperation among various agencies in the community in order for all of them to serve citizens' needs. Scores of communities throughout the state offer some of the programs encompassed in the definition of community education. The most common program offerings are classes in enrichment and the ABE-GED (Adult Basic Education-General Education Development) services for adults. The above programs are usually administered through the community college in that area, although there are instances wherein either or both of the programs is affordable by the local board of education. It can rarely be predicted whether the offering of classes to adults increases the likelihood for expanding toward a comprehensive community education program or whether this causes decisionmakers to believe that this much is about all that is essential to do.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a program in Educational Administration to prepare specialists in community education and to offer a seminar to educators which will assist them in becoming knowledgeable about community education.

The greatest potential which appears to be immediately likely which will enhance the rapid expansion of community education is pending federal legislation. The National Community Education Association office reports that the House has passed a $500,000,000 community education bill during the next five years and that the Senate is expected to consider it in September. The bill presently will be divided among every state with the major portion of the bill being distributed according to population. It is difficult for one to speculate about the implications of such legislation should the bill be passed with major money appropriated. Present

appropriations total about $3,500,000 with only about $1,500,000 available to local districts.

Conversely, should Nebraska pass a rigid lid bill limiting local district expenditures such that existing K-12 programs would suffer or even be diminished, community education developments would be nil. Community education is designed to enhance services to all people and to increase cooperating agencies' successes, not to compete with existing efforts. One reason for a slowing down of the growth of community education during the last school year was the result of the petition drive which reduced state aid dollars the legislature had appropriated for the 1977-78 school year. Should a lid limit be passed which would curtail educators being able to serve people, a slow down would be inevitable immediately. However, in the long run, efforts would be made to develop community support through community education efforts which would demonstrate that services to all of our citizens through local school districts are vital, viable, and more economical than can be provided by any other agency. A sense of community is essential for our citizens in every community and no organization can contribute to this feeling as well as can the local school district. If Jefferson's statement, "No nation can be free and ignorant at the same time," was true in the late 18th Century, it is surely applicable in the late 20th Century.

Nebraska could move in any of several directions to encourage rapid expansion of community education. The one essential ingredient of community education is that it be locally controlled. It also seems imminent that the State Department of Education create a coordinating position of community education with some restructuring of present programs now being coordinated. No state has experienced vast success in developing community education thrusts in a large number of local school districts which has not provided some incentive financial aid to those districts. Minnesota's state support for community education provides only about fourteen cents per citizen and, yet, in about seven years community education programs have been created in well over one-half of their local school districts.

Any plan to develop state support for helping to finance community education should provide for continued cooperation with our state's area community colleges. Potential for cooperative efforts here appear to be without limit.

The present utilization of local school buildings in nearly every Nebraska community represents a tremendous waste. Approximately one-half of the days of the year find the buildings locked up and totally unused. On the days they are open, the building is seldom utilized more than about 25 percent of the time. Taxpayers seem totally unmindful of the fact that they own the buildings and that they should be available to the citizens throughout the school district when they aren't being used as a part of the regular school program. It is frightening to see disenchanted, lonely people in a community where school buildings could be serving a useful function in giving people feelings of warmth, opportunities for growth, recreation or leisure, or a sense of belonging.

Educators, regardless of the level, have little understanding of the ways people can be better served. Everyone seems to understand and comprehend the legal components of compulsory education, but few educators, board members, or citizens portray any cognizance of the moral obligations which are present to help create a sense of community or to help people find increased purpose in life.

The political climate in Nebraska is such that one rarely thinks about ways we can improve the quality of life for the citizens of the state, but rather the creation of an attitude which breeds suspicion and contempt for every tax-consuming agency and institution in existence. The concern here is not to advocate increased taxes but a better use of the investment we have already made through taxes we have already paid. The undereducated and the disenchanted citizens who reside in every community represent a waste which we can no longer afford or tolerate. Community education represents a great potential to reduce this waste. It is time every effort be made to recapture a true feeling of mankind and concern for our neighbor.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: GOVERNANCE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION,

James Furman, Executive Director, Illinois Higher Education Board, Springfield, Illinois

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Governance of postsecondary education is a subject of vital interest to taxpayers, politicians, and key actors in the postsecondary education arena. Coordination is not governance and neither coordination nor governance always insures the most effective and prudent uses of precious resources. Mr. James Furman offers the Illinois perspective on governance in postsecondary education.

The topic that you've given me is governance in postsecondary education and obviously there are a variety of perspectives about governance. My perspective comes from my job as the director of a statewide higher education agency in the State of Illinois and the emphasis that I give as it relates to governance really is in the context of coordination, the kind of work that we do in the State of Illinois. It's not unlike the work that I've been involved in for the five years previous in the State of Washington and five years before that in the State of Ohio. Really the major responsibilities that we have in the State of Illinois are not unlike the job that I had, as I said, in the two other states. We're concerned about presenting budget recommendations for the entire state system of higher education and also about giving some direct'on at the statewide level to the development of new programs and setting program priorities for the colleges and universities in Illinois. That authority of the statewide board in Illinois is a strong authority in the sense that the final approval or disapproval in developing new degree programs rests with this board in its assessment of need and in its assessment for cost. Consequently, before a state university or a community college in Illinois can initiate a new program it must be reviewed by this board and alternately the recommendation is the one that carries as far as whether or not that program is initiated by that institution.

I'm sure that all of you know that many states, as a matter of fact, the great majority of all the states, have some kind of statewide higher education board. As a matter of fact, Nebraska is one of three states in the country today that does not have some type of statewide higher education agency. I'm ignoring for the moment the 1202 commissions which really are a little different in terms of their operations and perspective, as it relates to an ongoing, central statewide agency. But even though there are forty-seven states that have the statewide boards, they really do differ dramatically all over the country. Within the forty-seven I guess you would say there are three major kinds of statewide boards.

First, there is what we would call a single governing board that performs both a coordinating function and a direct operating function for higher education. There are a number of states, about fifteen in the country, that have a single statewide board for both coordination and operations. Beyond that there are coordinating boards, approximately thirty such coordination boards in the country today, one of which would be in the State of Illinois. These coordinating boards again vary a great deal in terms of their structure and in terms of their operations. Essentially they break down into two different types of coordinating boards, what we professionally in the trade would call strong coordinating boards and weak coordinating boards. The strong moniker that's attached to boards of this kind simply means that they have more direct authority, and they have more in the way of ultimate responsibility than would be true for a weak coordinating board. The State of Illinois would be in the area of a strong coordinating board and that's because the board has the final authority, as I mentioned, in approving new degree programs and in presenting a consolidated budget for all of postsecondary education in the State of Illinois.

The weak coordinating boards are primarily advisory in the kinds of things that they do. They give advice on whether or not a new program might be established, or they give advice on whether or not a program might be discontinued, but it's up to the institution to consider that advice and then proceed in its own judgment. In addition, a weak coordinating board doesn't have the responsibility to present a consolidated budget for all of postsecondary education in the state. So the distinction between those two kinds of coordinating boards is really in terms of the power and the authority that the board has in a particular state.

Now even though in the textbooks we make this distinction, I think there's a pragmatic matter. The truth is that if an advisory board, which would be considered a weak coordinating board, has the confidence of the political leadership of the state, in the legislature and in the Governor's office, even though it makes advice if it has the credibility and the support of the political leadership in the state, then it really doesn't make all that much difference to my mind whether it's a weak coordinating board or a strong coordinating board, because that advice generally will be followed and in many instances the institutions will follow the advice on program recommendations simply because the institution would be unwilling to challenge that recommendation before the legislature or before the Governor and the Bureau of the Budgets or whatever the agency might be called in finance in state government.

So much of the strength and the vitality of the coordinating board depends, I think, on the credibility that it has and the kinds of recommendations that it makes with respect to programs and with respect to finance. As a matter of fact, in the last fifteen years in the United States more than one-half of the statewide higher education agencies have been established. So this is relatively a new phenomenon in higher education and again the students of higher education, in terms of programming and philosophy, and students of public administration have a number of

reasons, many of them philosophical, as to why these agencies were established. We talk about the need for master planning, we talk about the need for an overall philosophy of higher education in the state that we would look to in the statewide coordinating board, but I think actually the reason that these boards have been created in the last fifteen years relate far more to pragmatic considerations that gave rise to concerns in legislatures and in the office of the Governors, in state after state in the 1950's and 1960's that related to dollars and related to concerns by the legislatures and by the Governors, that somehow they didn't have the perspective that they felt they needed as it related to higher education costs and it related to the development of new programs in higher education within the state.

We have had enormous growth in this country in higher education as you people know better than I. In the 50's and the 60's we have been doubling our enrollments in higher education, but at the same time in real dollars we have been tripling the state expenditures for higher education and that strips away the inflation factor as well. So even in the context of the enormous enrollment growth that we've had, the dollars have outstripped the enrollment, and for a good many reasons, but in doing that I think it had increasingly led to uneasiness in state legislative halls and again in the executive office of state government. Somehow they needed an agency that they could look to, that hopefully would give them an independent perspective, that had as its context a commitment to higher education and its worth and its value in terms of what the state was about. But at the same time would be a point of view that simply was not a captive of the higher education establishment and by captive I mean that it simply was not a lobbyist for more programs, and for more dollars in higher education. Hopefully, if the process worked well, this kind of agency would have its commitment to higher education but be somewhat more dispassionate than one might find from a university president who very legitimately felt that more programs and more dollars were needed and saw those needs in ways that didn't allow that president to stand back and think about those needs and those requirements as it related to other institutions of higher education in the state, let alone other government services within the state. So again if the theory worked right and if the rationale came about as to why these boards were created, it would be that this board would serve as a buffer, as a bridge between the political leadership on one end of the continuum and the educational leadership on the other side of the continuum.

I think it's fair to say if the boards work well, the executive director and the staff of these agencies are not viewed with great enthusiasm either by the political leadership of the state or certainly by the educational leadership of the state. There's always the nagging uneasiness, the feeling of abrasiveness, that i think is almost by definition the working area of a statewide board between the institutions and the political leadership. Institutions feel, and again understandably so, that the statewide higher education board, because it doesn't accept all of the requests for new dollars, because it has a skeptical attitude about the need for more and more new programs, that the higher education board doesn't really understand the full intent and the aspirations as presented by the colleges and universities and does not fully understand the political

realities facing legislators and governors as they deal with problems of taxation and as they deal with problems of priorities within all areas of government service.

So this board is in the middle and it's an operation that doesn't lead to a very popular position for the director of that agency in the kind of work that he does. I remember when I first went to the State of Washington five and one-half years ago, I was told repeatedly that I very quickly had to come to terms with the chairman of the appropriations committee in the State of Washington in terms of explaining what I thought the statewide board could do and what role it could play. It was impressed upon me how terribly important it was that I establish rapport with the state senator who clearly was the most powerful state senator in Washington. So much so that when I finally was able to meet with the state senator, I did with great trepidation because he was not particularly a friend of higher education and he, as many chairmen of appropriations committee legislators are, was a hard-driving legislator who had to deal in terms of dollars every day and in terms of some skepticism about what he could afford and what kind of requests were being made of him. We had a conversation that was not very satisfactory to me because his opening comments were something to the extent that he felt that I was another bureaucratic problem that he had to deal with, that he didn't have much confidence in the work that would come out of this agency. Incidentally, this was a new statewide board and I was its first director. Upon leaving things were not bad enough, he said to me one final point, Mr. Furman, if the President of the University of Washington ever comes to me and says that you're doing a fine job, then I'll know that you're not worth a damn. Now, that's terribly over-simplified but in some ways in dealing with the legislature there has to be an understanding and a working relationship with the political leadership that we are able to present a point of view that is simply not exactly what the University of Washington or the University of Illinois might request in the way of new programs. I think that's a terribly important concept and I think it's terribly important at the same time this agency not become a hachet operation for the political needs of the state and do it in a way that the agency turns its back on making that commitment for increased support and increased program development in higher education.

Twelve years ago in the State of Ohio I was working for the state legislature. My background is not in education, it's really in public administration and I worked for the Legislative Research Council in the State of Ohio. I directed a study for the state legislature that recommended that a statewide higher education agency be created for that state. Much to my surprise, because I think more than two-thirds of any studies that I ever directed ended up on the shelf and I distributed multiple copies to my mother, frankly not a great deal came of some of my recommendations and ideas as a researcher for the state legislature. But much to my surprise, the state legislature and the Governor of the State of Ohio at the time felt that there was merit in that study and in the recommendations that were made and that gave rise to the creation of the Ohio Board of Regents, which is like the Board of Higher Education in Illinois and the other agencies that I've described around the country. I came ultimately

to my work with the Ohio Board of Regents not because of my background as an administrator in higher education or as a faculty member but because of the studies that I had directed dealing with education, which increasingly became an area of concern for me in terms of the work that I did for the Ohio legislature.

I think in some ways the background that I had reflect the attitude and the tone that agencies in higher education at the statewide level are trying to achieve. A person and a staff that has some sensitivity to the academic community and to the goodness and the worth of higher education and what it means to a state and at the same time hopefully have some sensitivity to the problems that legislators and governors must deal with every day in terms of the priorities that they face in the work that they are required to enter into in making judgments, programs, and costs and needs across all governmental services within a state. So I think the background that I had was especially good in terms of the work that ultimately I've gotten into and have been involved in during the last ten or eleven years.

We in the State of Illinois are involved in the development of a master plan for higher education. This is by no means the first master plan for the State of Illinois; as a matter of fact, this is the fourth master plan. If you do have a chance to read tonight's editorial in the Lincoln newspaper, I think you'll find it interesting because it seems to me that it describes very well the dilemma faced by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in the work that it does in being the broker, the bridge between the institutions on one hand and the political leadership on the other hand. We, in our first draft of this master plan, are saying some very unpopular things to the academic community in the State of Illinois. We're saying, first of all, that we feel that there are some dramatic changes that will be occurring which will have tremendous impact on the future of higher education, specifically in Illinois, and indeed in this country. In many ways this impact is simply a small part of the scenario that affects the economy and the government of this country and higher education is simply the one cog and the State of Illinois is but one important state as it relates to higher education. We're saying, for example, that we will continue to have enrollment increases in the State of Illinois in the next four or five years but beginning in the 1980's we expect a decline to set in in enrollments in Illinois and by the time we reach 1990, in the State of Illinois the enrollments will be essentially the same in 1990 in total as they are this year statewide for higher education.

Now, that has some critically important implications for our planning and for the priorities we consider as we look to higher education needs and resource requirements in the years ahead. What we're saying is that in order to meet what we call an enrollment bulge in the next few years, we intend to go very slowly in adding new faculties and in building any more classrooms for the State of Illinois because we feel certain that by the time we reach the 1980's we run the very real risk of being overstaffed and having more capacity than we can handle in the state because of the changing enrollment patterns. We know, for example, nationally that next

year we will have the largest high school graduating class in the history of the United States but we also know that beginning by about 1981 that we will have 35 percent fewer high school graduates than we currently have when we reached the zenith of this high school graduating class in numbers next year.

Now, we know as a corollary to that higher education indeed will be reaching new target populations, new adult populations that will be enrolling in higher education in the future in numbers larger than we've ever experienced before. But despite that, we feel that we'll be fortunate to offset the decline in the traditional college pool of eighteen to twenty-one year olds by the new adult target population such as minorities, women, senior citizens, and people over thirty enrolling in increasing numbers in higher education. Despite that, we feel that we have to be very cautious because of the decline in the numbers of high school graduates. Now, it's not very popular to take that position in the State of Illinois or anyplace in the country today, particularly when we're at the top of an enrollment curve and particularly in the context of explosive enrollment and program growth in higher education, indeed in the last twenty-five years. But it seems to us that as the statewide agency, it's our responsibility to be on the cutting edge and to begin to suggest that we have to look farther down the road in what the implications are for higher education.

Another parallel to that in the State of Illinois is that in the last ten years the percentage of general revenues going to higher education from the State of Illinois has declined from 22 percent of total general revenues to the figure reached this year which was 17 percent. Now that's a dramatic drop when that's translated into dollars, because every percentage decline results in a loss of 50 million dollars below what would have been achieved if that percentage had not been lost. So in the course of the last decade, higher education in Illinois has been receiving less and less of state general revenues and really if they'd held where they were at 22 percent, they would be receiving 250 million dollars more this year in state support than actually materialized. That is not unique to the State of Illinois; this is a pattern that's developing throughout the country. As a matter of fact in the last two years, two-thirds of the states have had decreases in the percentages of revenues going to higher education. Almost in the remaining one-third of the states, the picture has been to hold their own as far as that percentage is concerned. Very few states, and Nebraska may be an exception, have actually increased the percentage going to higher education. Then again in a very unpopular way, our board and our recommendations have come to the conclusion that we will be fortunate in Illinois to maintain in the years ahead the percentage that we're currently at in terms of revenues going to higher education.

We're saying increasingly to the educational leadership of the state that we've got to be about the business of reallocation, reprioritization as it relates to spending in higher education. If there's any way that we can get through the enrollment bulge of the next few years, meet the inflationary costs that are coming about that require literally tens of millions of dollars in our states to keep even in inflation, if we're going to have

any chance to overcome these changes in resource patterns and these changes in enrollment patterns, we're going to have to work hard on reallocation of funding. Reallocation means to me that some programs will be discontinued. Reallocation means that we're going to have to think very hard about the new programs that we start because those new programs could well be at the expense of current, existing programs within our state university structure. Despite that talk, it's a long ways from the projections and the recommendations of the board of higher education and the acceptance by the institutions that indeed there could well be a new day dawning in higher education, not only in Illinois but in the country because this year alone the board of higher education was presented with seventy new degree requests by our public four-year universities. We simply cannot support that kind of growth in the context of the changes that we see taking place in higher education. All of that leads to confrontation and to some posturing between the state board and its director and the presidents of the universities and it's a little difficult, I think sometimes, on the central nervous system of the director of a statewide higher education board to be involved in these kinds of discussions and arguments.

I guess before you feel that Illinois has hit the downhill skids in higher education, you should understand that this year we appropriated in state funds nearly one billion dollars in support of the operations of our state universities and community colleges in the State of Illinois. That's a large sum of money that relates both to the public sector and some help to the private sector as well. In the State of Washington, just before I left the state, we discontinued fifty graduate degree programs in that state after a lengthy two-year discussion and debate between the statewide board and the colleges and universities in the State of Washington. It started out as a battle in the trenches between the colleges and the faculty and the statewide board, but finally when it ended, I think that there was mutual support and mutual respect for the different positions and the priorities that the statewide board had with the individual colleges and universities. Again before you feel too badly about graduate education in the State of Washington, you should know that there are 450 separate graduate degree programs in the four-year public sector alone in the State of Washington. So even though we made changes and we discontinued some programs, we discontinued a very small part of the total graduate offerings in the State of Washington. I also might point out that in the first 100 year history in the State of Washington, not one single graduate degree program had ever been discontinued. That is an interesting statistic and it provides, I think, the setting again between the work of a statewide board and the individual colleges and universities.

Individual colleges and universities, rightfully so, have great difficulty on their own in doing the reallocation that has to be done, without some nudging from a statewide board. That is because, obviously, faculty are not often ones to take the initiative to discontinue programs and make major changes that hit at the very morale and fiber of what a faculty is about. I wouldn't expect them to and I would expect them to debate vigorously with the statewide board when we do talk about new priorities and reallocations.

This state board of higher education in Illinois recommended 70 million dollars in new general revenue fund money for the colleges and universities in Illinois last year. So it is well to know that we are an advocate for higher education but an advocate in a setting somewhat different than you would find, I think, without a statewide higher education board. I've talked about thirty minutes and I think that's probably twenty minutes longer than I should. That's a little background where I'm from and the work that I've been involved in and I can only say that I don't think there's any one organizational structure for a statewide board and that in any way is a model or a prototype that other states should look at. We have a system of systems in Illinois, but Illinois is a state of eleven to twelve million people, far more complex in its higher education system and I think that the traditions and the workings of organizational structures really can be quite different depending on the background within a particular state. I think the band is about to strike up.

CURRENT STATUS: GOVERNANCE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

No topic of discussion in the NES program has received as dramatic a response as the governance of postsecondary education. The seminar charged the legislature with the responsibility to provide enabling legislation and in the past three years the legislature has responded and repeatedly addressed this area. A Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education has been created. The various institutions which constitute the state system have been required to define their respective roles and missions. Technical and community college functions and responsibilities have been defined, revised, and amended. The role of continuing education in Nebraska has been a topic of discussion. All of this has been undertaken due not only to the mandate of the legislature but with the cooperation of the postsecondary institutions. Since the roles and missions of the institutions have now been defined in a process which involved a great deal of compromise, there presently appears to be little conflict among the institutions. However, the ramifications of these hard fought compromises may in future years lead to serious difficulties. Hopefully, the Commission will be able to adapt to these changes.

One of the most important events since the seminar was the decision of the Nebraska Supreme Court in Board of Regents v. Exon. In a decision which was required to interpret the Nebraska Constitution, the court held that the Board of Regents, not the legislature, possessed the Constitutional authority for the internal governance and daily operations of the institution. However, since the legislature can still control the overall budget of the institution, it can exert a dramatic influence as a practical matter. There is very little out-of-state influence in this area of governance. What exists is based upon conference membership requirements and accreditation standards. The federal government exerts its influence in the usual manner (i.e., 1202 commissions), regulations, and limitations

based upon funding. It is clear that the harmonious effort of the legislature, the cooperation of the state institutions, and the newly created Commission have achieved an excellent resolution of the issue of governance in postsecondary educations.

References: Nebraska Constitution, Article 7; Nebraska Revised Statutes §85-901 to 916, 79-2636 to 2653, 79-2801, LB 756; NES seminar, reports, and discussions; Board of Regents v. Exon, 119 Neb. 146; Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education; selected interviews; following legislative proposals and resolutions also appropriate: LB 793 (failed on final reading), LB 897 and 897A, LB 954, LR 251, 278, 279, and 301.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: GOVERNANCE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

It appears to me that James Furman had two basic assumptions concerning the coordination of postsecondary education. Both of those assumptions were based upon governance rather than coordination. His basic assumptions were: (1) that a coordinating agency or a governing agency must have total program control, and (2) be able to make budgetary recommendations. He also indicated that a strong board is a board which has the authority to control programs and to implement budget recommendations and a weak board is a board which has the capability of making recommendations regarding budgetary requests and to have some control over programs offered by postsecondary institutions.

As you are well aware, the Nebraska Coordinating Commission does not have either authority, control of programs of institutions of higher education in the State of Nebraska, or the authority to make recommendations concerning budget. Therefore, concerning the current status of coordination of postsecondary education, and considering Dr. Furman's assumptions, I would have to say that there is no coordination of postsecondary education in Nebraska.

The role and mission study of the Unicameral and the resulting bill LB 459 did spell out some limitations of programs for the three existing public sectors of postsecondary education in the State of Nebraska. That bill did not specify a method by which public institutions may expand or contract their programs. At the present time, each individual institution through its governing board has full responsibility for the programs offered by that institution and all program changes. There is, however, an implication that if an institution were to create a new program and if the legislature were aware of that new program that the legislature would not support that program fiscally.

If we define coordination to mean institutions working together toward common goals, rather than program and budgetary control, then there has

been some progress toward coordination of postsecondary education in Nebraska. The Commission, through studies that it has made and the federal programs which it operates, has played a role in increasing the cooperation of institutions in student financial aid programs, the development of adult and continuing education programs, the development of negotiated agreements between institutions in regard to transferability of credit, the development of a uniform information system (which is yet to be implemented) and through consideration of the issue of attrition at colleges and universities. Although such cooperation and coordination is becoming more evident, documentation of actual success is more difficult.

In regard to the future direction of the coordination of postsecondary education, the legislature has made it plain that budgetary control will be through the legislature and that a limited amount of program control, through budget submissions, will be through the legislature. The Commission has played a service role at present and will be taking a stronger role toward the coordination of programs and program offerings among and between institutions. To put it simply, the role of the Commission is to emphasize to the institutions, general public, legislature, and executive branch of government the fact that there is a system of postsecondary education in the State of Nebraska. That system involves all five sectors of postsecondary education (and the interrelationships which exist between those systems) in the development of programs to better serve the various regions of the state. The Commission will become more involved with the review and recommendations concerning program offerings of institutions.

If coordination is to be mandated, it will come very slowly. If coordination comes through mutual understanding of the need for a system of postsecondary education in the state, it will come sooner. Since their creation, all institutions (public, private, and independent) in the State of Nebraska have had completely independent control. The individual governing boards of these institutions have complete control of the institutions with no oversight by any outside group, unless you include the budgetary review by the State of Nebraska for public institutions and the programmatic review of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities. Therefore, the idea that there should be any centralized authority which would have any level of control over the individual institution will be fought as a repugnant idea by each and every institution.

The rules of the game are about to be changed. Although this year will produce the highest enrollments of all institutions in the state, the next decade will show a decline in enrollment in which institution will be fighting institution for full-time students and for control of adult and continuing education programs which provide part-time and non-credit students. If the institutions operate entirely independently, the stress and strain may be great enough to break the backs of several institutions. The development of a coordinated system which feeds students from one institution to another and which meets the needs of business, industry, and the local housewife, as well as the 18-22 year olds will provide survival for institutions. It is this coordinated concept that we will be battling

for. Not for program control, not for budgetary control, since control is governance, not coordination.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: GOVERNANCE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

What does LB 756 (the Coordination Bill for Nebraska) mean to the role and duties of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education? The Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education has been assigned the responsibility of administering a uniform data system that will be developed by the Legislature. Another task assigned to the Coordinating Commission, during the 1978 Legislative Session, is the administration of a State Scholarship Award Program, enacted into law as Legislative Bill 743. Yet another duty the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education has assumed is to make studies covering certain aspects of postsecondary education in Nebraska. Such studies have been conducted on a proposed uniform educational information system; adult and continuing education instructional programs; student attrition; transferability of credit and articulation of postsecondary education programs; and enrollment trends from 1967 to 1987. The Commission will also provide staff support to the Legislature in various other areas. But when compared with other coordinating commissions, the Nebraska Coordinating Commission is not a strong one, and will probably not become one.

What does the Nebraska Supreme Court decision, the enactment of LB 756, and the creation of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission mean for educational coordination in the State of Nebraska? Historically, there has been little coordination between public and private education in Nebraska and, given the limited powers of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission, that situation will probably continue. While there have been differences between the Governor and the Legislature over developments in higher education, there seems to be a general concern in state government about the growth of appropriations for public higher education institutions in Nebraska. The Supreme Court decision may well have reduced the involvement of the Legislature, and especially the state's administrative agencies, in the day-to-day operations of the state colleges, the technical community colleges, and the University. But there will be, in all probability, much greater concern with overall accountability and much closer scrutiny paid to requests for tax-fund increases in the field of higher education.

Nebraska experienced its growth in appropriations for institutions of higher education five to ten years after the phenomena appeared generally in the United States. But those days appear to be over. There is much talk of spending lids and the possibility of constitutional provisions similar to Proposition 13, recently enacted in California. As a result, there is an increasing call for the University, the state colleges, and technical community colleges to do more with less, by reallocating internal resources. This has already been evident in the preparation of the budgets by the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, by the State College

Board, and by the technical community college boards. In contrast to prior calls for large budgetary increases, each of the governing boards is in the course of presenting the Governor and the Legislature with budgets that call for modest increases, barely keeping up with the cost of inflation.

It should be noted that the annual budget requests submitted to the Governor and the Legislature by each public institution of higher education in Nebraska are only the first steps in the budget process. Received by state government in September, these requests are then supplemented by the Governor's budgetary recommendations to the Legislature at the beginning of the Legislative session, in January or February of each year. These two documents become the basis for Legislative recommendations, eventually included in appropriations bills, that must be approved by the Governor, or his veto must be overridden, before they become law.

In recent years, the Governor's budgetary recommendations for higher education have been exceeded significantly on several occasions by appropriations bills approved by the Legislature. In those cases, sections of the appropriations bills were vetoed by the Governor but his vetoes were overridden by the Legislature, with significant increases in tax fund support to the public institutions of higher education in Nebraska, especially the University. But the Governor's budgetary recommendation for the public institutions of higher education was virtually identical with that approved by the Legislature for 1978-1979 and very close cooperation has developed between the Governor and his staff and the Legislature, with the result that their budgetary decisions in public higher education will probably be made jointly.

In all likelihood, the budget process in Nebraska, which has been largely a political process, will move in the direction of some sort of formula-driven model. The data that were collected as part of the role and mission exercise by the Nebraska Postsecondary Educational Advisory Committee are now being analyzed by the Governor's staff and by the Legislature, and Nebraska may well see formula-driven budgets in the future. Program reviews are becoming more and more common within Nebraska's educational institutions, and in all likelihood, program reviews will become part of the budget process in the future.

The development of collective bargaining between the faculties of the state colleges and the technical community colleges and their administrations has not yet had any appreciable influence on the autonomy of those institutions. The collective bargaining process in Nebraska, carried out under the authority of the Nebraska Court of Industrial Relations, carries the provision that contracts negotiated with state agencies must be approved by the Legislature before becoming effective. This provision is likely to eliminate the negotiation of salary packages that will not be funded by the Legislature and in fact the collective bargaining with the faculties of the state colleges and technical community colleges has involved only the distribution, rather than the amount, of the salary package. The University as yet has no collective bargaining, though there has been a good deal of

concern among administrators of public agencies about the powers of the Court of Industrial Relations, but as yet the Court and collective bargaining in general has not interfered with the autonomy of the various segments of public higher education in the state.

Enrollment projections and budgetary constraints are thus the two factors that will probably have the greatest influence on public higher education in Nebraska in the decades ahead.

The Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education has recently completed a study of enrollment projections for postsecondary education in Nebraska until 1987. Noting the decline of live births and potential high school graduates, the Commission has predicted that both full-time enrollment and first-time full-time enrollment will decline in the years ahead, but that part-time enrollments in Nebraska's institutions of higher education will increase. The result between now and 1987 will be a slight decline in the total enrollment at those institutions, with more and more efforts of the institutions being concentrated on meeting the needs of the part-time non-credit student.

The stable and even declining enrollments predicted by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission, plus the budgetary strains noted earlier, will keep the Nebraska Legislature actively involved in year-by-year coordination of Nebraska's public postsecondary educational institutions. Those institutions will have to do more justifying of their programs than in the past and look to increases in non-state assistance for whatever additional operational flexibility they may achieve in the next decade.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: EDUCATION POLICY FOR NEBRASKA--WHO DETERMINES IT? Dale K. Hayes, Chairman, Department of Educational Administration, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

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Everyone wants a piece of the action. Are the schools run today from the nation's capital, the state capital, the local school district's offices, or someplace else? Or is no one minding the store?

Hayes introduced the subject, "Education Policy for Nebraska--Who Determines It?" In his opening comments, Hayes discussed the background and rationale for the seminar. He noted that at the conclusion of an April, 1976 Associates meeting in Washington, D.C., he was convinced that getting a group of people together to discuss the feasibility, significance, and the potential usefulness of setting up a State of Nebraska Education Policy Commission would be an important priority for NES to pursue. "Creeping federalism" juxtaposed with the struggle for school districts to maintain "local control" has mushroomed into conflagration between local, state, and federal education agencies. Hayes visualized education in Nebraska as currently operating in a vacuum in terms of policy determination; a vacuum which is characterized by special interest groups competing for "control."

The groups seeking control do not reflect the attitudes, values, and beliefs of the general society. The proposition set forth for participant consideration was described through analogy: Hayes felt that the philosophical basis of the Marshall Plan (thesis: move into a sphere of potential influence if a vacuum of power exists) perhaps best described the ethical rationale on which a Nebraska Education Policy Commission would begin to function. Hayes submitted four basic statements for participant consideration:

1. If states are to control education, they will need policies which reflect societal needs, or else Congress and the federal government will determine policy for them.

2. Education policy should reflect the mainline thrust of a society.

3. Education policy in Nebraska should be written to fulfill purposes of education in American democracy.

4. A mechanism is needed to facilitate recommendations for education policy development and implementation in Nebraska.

Education is a state function and education policy is a matter for all people to decide. Nebraska has a serious problem with regard to education policy in that some local school districts go off in all directions while others are ridiculously uniform.

Jim Browne, Coordinator for The Associates Program, presented background information on education policymaking in the various states, as viewed by TAP Associates. He reported that the sources of education policy emanate from very diverse, different, heterogeneous, and idiosyncratic states. It was his opinion that some states have no education policy; that their education policy is, in essence, "flapping in the wind." It has been Browne's impression that legislators are the only individuals in government who can decide what education policies are to be; and, if this is true, legislators are going to have a terrible time doing this, since they are not sure what education is.

Browne stated that currently in this country there is a battle being waged between educators and legislators. It was his feeling that thus far the legislators are winning the battle. It was his thesis that this will continue to be the case until educators can begin to find agreement among themselves with regard to appropriate education policy, and concomitantly, develop a mechanism for inclusion of the broader society in education policy determination.

Browne also cited some alternatives in education policy which have been attempted by other states. Among these were the conference board which is an aggregation of teachers, administrators, and the school board; the Education Council of Oklahoma; and the Education Commission of the States. For all practical purposes, none of these concepts has had any great impact in determining education policy.

Rod Treyvaud discussed the Australian system of education in which all control over education rests with the government. It was Treyvaud's contention that this is coordination at its ultimate. However, this type of coordination denies diversity in educational institutions, innovation, and competition among universities.

John Prasch pointed out that the art of administration is to find a middle ground that is satisfactory to all concerned, however, that middle ground is becoming more and more difficult to identify. Prasch was of the opinion that perhaps people have learned to abuse the system of democracy and that the goals and policies of school districts are often established by the minority even though these should be majority decisions.

Cliff Dale identified some of the arguments that might be encountered if a state education policy commission were to be established. Among these were mistrust of the legislature who contaminate the vote; the desire not to accept any more state aid because of legislative meddling; and a general mistrust of a policy committee.

The participants agreed that the determination of education policies should lie somewhere between complete governmental control and complete local control, which brought the group back to the same question: "Who is responsible for education policy?"

The group concurred that the responsibility for education policy should not rest solely with educators as educators do not always agree; that the responsibility for education policy should not rest solely with legislators as legislators do not always agree; and that the responsibility for education policy should not rest solely with the people as the people do not always agree.

The following alternatives were discussed:

1. A self-dissolving policies commission which would exist only as long as it would be useful.

2. An appointed committee composed of a cross-section of educators, legislators, and lay people who are totally dedicated to the task of education policy, and whose decisions are based upon sound judgment rather than on the fact that these individuals are accountable to a larger body. (The question was raised as to whether this committee would be a silent organization or whether it would be subject to great publicity and pressure.)

When the seminar adjourned, there were no concrete recommendations, no conclusions, and little agreement among the participants. The unstated but overriding topic of this seminar was clearly in evidence: educators do not always agree; legislators do not always agree; people do not always agree . . . and they didn't.

Conclusion

This was a unique seminar in many respects. The topic "Education Policy for Nebraska--Who Determines It?" was a catalyst; a catalyst which brought into full force a surfacing of emotional reactions to the general status of statewide education policy in Nebraska. Distinguished education officials openly discussed areas of concerns, and some expressed resentment toward development of a cohesive body for recommending education policy for the state. Politically active seminar participants voiced diverse opinions with regard to the necessity and the feasibility of a Nebraska education policy commission.

Although there was little agreement among the participants, many positive and useful ideas emerged from this seminar. Lively discussion provided numerous insights into both the pro's and con's of the establishment of an education policy commission for the State of Nebraska.

Salient Questions/Comments

1. Education policy is "flapping in the wind." No one seems to know what the profession of education is about.

2. Legislators have generated a series of what is the least bad solution to education policy, because there are no good solutions.

3. Hopefully, something will arise out of the interest of citizens and irate parents to improve education policy development in the United States.

4. What about the possibilities for a "vigilante" group as the moving force in education change versus a formal policy commission?

5. In the last fifteen years, we have not had a coherent education policy in Nebraska, nor any place else for that matter.

6. Education policy in this state ought to deal with the concept that this state helps solve problems for any and all of the districts of the state.

7. Central federal control in Australia has denied diversity, lack of innovation, and has forced uniformity upon the education system, K-university.

8. We face a crisis in decisionmaking in the schools of Nebraska; school boards (local/state) and all other levels of government find their hands tied by a "vocal minority."

9. The judiciary in the United States has become so involved in determining education policy that things have just gotten out of hand.

10. The politicans can only move in where there is a vacuum of power, and this is depicted in recent legislative impetus to pass special education mandates . . . and other statutory requirements.

11. We have control by the minority because within the lay public arena, we don't listen to the majority.

12. Nebraska doesn't want much power in its State Board of Education.

13. Would an education policy commission have any meaningful effect on policy in the state?

14. How would an education policy commission be organized? How would the members be selected, and what groups would they be representative of?

15. Let's not argue about which corner we put the church on. Let's decide if we need and want a church.

16. The rumblings in Grand Island are that there is a distrust for commissions. The people are searching for a leader, not a committee.

17. The problems of the rural schools of Nebraska are just as acute and chronic as they are in the urban and metropolitan districts. There is a deep feeling of mistrust of both the state and the federal government, and all their officials.

18. A few moments ago, I was going to suggest a plan of action for development of an education policy commission, now I'm not sure I agree there should be one.

19. It seems to me that the problem we face in our society is that the public won't own up to anything. The problem is how do you get the citizens of the state to own up realistically as to what they want in education policy? Like the alcoholic, the first thing one has to do is to admit one has a problem.

20. Diversity is great, and a commission might foster too much uniformity.

CURRENT STATUS: EDUCATION POLICY FOR NEBRASKA--WHO DETERMINES IT?

The topic of who determines education policy in Nebraska was addressed in Collegium V. Forces from both the private and public sector help to determine policy. Various influences from the public sector at national, state, and local levels all contribute to the creation of an adopted policy. In Nebraska, the federal government influences policy determinations in three distinct but related ways: legislation, administrative regulations, and Court decisions. Each of these exerts an influence statewide, but at the local district level the importance of one may appear paramount. One way in which the Feds try to control certain policy determinations is by tying funding to acceptance of their policies and/or programs. Various special interest groups attempt to influence policy at all three levels, and specific legislation or board policies are often a response to the lobbying efforts of these groups. Professional educators and national education organizations are two of these interest groups. The Education Commission of the States attempts to formulate education policy and Nebraska belongs to this Commission.

Both by Constitutional implication and statutory requirements, the policy determinations made in Nebraska are vested in the State Board of Education and at the local level in the local school district's board of education. However, the legislature has a major influence upon policy determinations due to the enactment of new legislation and the control of the budget. The Commissioner and the State Department of Education have the responsibility to implement the policies and must be considered to have a role in policy determination because the prioritization, emphasis, and implementation of these policies must involve a large amount of discretion.

At the postsecondary level the Board of Regents and several Boards of Trustees of the state institutions have both Constitutional and statutory authority for policy determinations.

The school board has the authority for determining policy at the local level. However, administrators and teachers often have a subtle influence upon these policies, particularly when the superintendent is charged with the responsibility to recommend new policies. The citizens of the district exert a less subtle influence by electing board members, by approval of bond issues, and generally by the amount of community support of the schools. The size and location of a district will place financial limitations upon the district and thus affect the policies of the district. Local districts are required to have a copy of their policies on file with the State Department, and there is a clear trend in Nebraska to the adoption of more comprehensive policies at the district level. It is clear that there are many forces which operate to determine policies in Nebraska, but the large number of local districts and the resistance to reorganization are clear indications that there is still a great deal of local policy determination.

References: Nebraska Constitution, Article 7; Nebraska Revised Statutes §79-443, 85-100 et seq., 79-2501, 2502; State Department of Education: Rules and Regulations; Collegium V; NES seminars, reports, and comments; and selected interviews with legislative, University, and state personnel.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: EDUCATION POLICY FOR NEBRASKA--WHO DETERMINES IT?

The current status of education policy in Nebraska is dictated by the tax structure, state aid, etc. For the past eight years this has been dominated by Governor Exon and Zeke Brauer of the Nebraska School Improvement Association and those other individuals who believe in the same principles. The current status of education policy is local control, no state interference, teach the basic three R's, and above all, do not use any funds from any level to pay for anything except bare, minimum essentials. The future direction of the development of education policy in terms of how the state is currently structured will undoubtedly revert even further to the tax issues as evidenced by the 5 percent lid, the LB 33 on the referendum this fall, and the election of conservatives in other states in the country. We are definitely in a participatory democracy rather than what the system really should be, namely, representative democracy. The people of the state as well as the country want an active immediate response to their questions and concerns.

In my judgment, the future direction of the development of education policy should be in the future where it should be now, namely, in the hands of those individuals elected by the people. True representative government

is, of course, a reflection of what local individuals conceive. Nevertheless, it is important that these individual people realize the elected officials should be responsible for education policies of the state as well as any other policy so desired and necessary.

NEBRASKA EDUCATION SEMINAR PAPER: THE NEED FOR A NEBRASKA EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION, Dale K. Hayes, Chairman, Department of Educational Administration, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

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Is there a need for an Education Policy Commission in Nebraska? What are some of the reasons why consideration is given to the formation of such a commission? The topic of this seminar paper explores a new approach to some old questions.

Hayes introduced the subject by mentioning the fact that the Nebraska Unicameral may be introducing legislation in the near future requiring statewide testing. There has been a movement across the country to provide greater accountability in education. The electorate has become more interested in insuring quality education. One of the methods that is gaining popularity is statewide testing. Through statewide testing it is felt that the educational product can be assessed and the educational institutions made accountable for certain minimum standards.

A policy commission is needed in order to determine systematically the educational product for which the educational institutions are to be held accountable. A commission would allow citizen input in the setting of goals which are realistic and in line with the educational goals of the state. These goals and standards would be made possible through the consensus that can be achieved through a commission. A commission could also allow a state to establish policies that would govern the relationship between the various levels of education. In a systematic manner, a commission could determine and recommend the functions of the various units of higher education from the community college to the university. Policy recommendations in these areas would help determine resource allocation and the working relationships between the various units of higher education.

What a Policy Commission Might Do

The movement toward accountability in education might result in the creation of a National Education Policies Commission. A National Education Policies Commission may be created which would establish standards and goals for educational institutions, due to the default of the state's ability or willingness to determine them for themselves. The charges of such a commission would be to recommend goals and standards which may be in line with what citizens expect from education nationally but would ignore the individual differences between states. A policy commission in

a state could help insure that the goals and standards for an individual state accurately reflect the expectations of the citizens of that state.

A policies commission within a state could determine the goals of education outside the area of the basics. They could allow a state to determine what educational institutions should be doing in areas such as life skills and vocational education. Areas such as the basics can be measured by statewide testing, but a commission is needed in order to set the standards for which educational institutions will be held accountable in the area of teaching the basics and also establish standards for programs that would not be readily measurable using statewide testing.

The coordination functions of the Nebraska Education Policies Commission could involve the defining of functions of various entities. Educational service units, community colleges, and local school districts need to know their roles and their proper relationships to one another. This process could be undertaken through the consensus gained through citizen input into the goal setting process made possible by an education policy commission.

How Would the Nebraska Education Policies Commission Be Funded?

The funding source for such a commission represents a problem. The commission should be as apolitical as possible. It should not be an advocate for any particular interest group in the state. Political neutrality is essential in order for the commission to have maximum impact on the education policies within the state. Funding for such a commission could come from a variety of sources. Which sources would be best is still an open question.

Support for a Nebraska Policies Commission has been expressed by some superintendents in the state. They have felt that there is a need for such a commission and they have expressed a willingness to fund such a commission.

What Has Statewide Testing Been Used For In Other States?

New York and Florida have both used statewide testing extensively. New York has used its testing program primarily as a basis for determining college entrance. Florida has used its program as an aid in determining the amount of state funding.

Paul Belz stated that he was in favor of some type of a statewide testing program that would emphasize the basics. John Prasch countered that standardized testing is not sufficiently sophisticated to measure accurately the basics. He contended that standardized tests tended to measure socioeconomic status rather than school efficiency. A policies commission is needed instead--at least prior to choosing testing instruments.

One problem with education is that of a lack of consensus about goals and directions. Consensus is becoming harder to achieve. A policies commission would serve as a locus for consensus to be reached.

Ross Rasmussen supported Prasch. He felt no one group is viewed as having the authority to lead in education today. This loss of leadership is the one problem most crucial to education. A policies commission could be a vehicle that would allow for leadership to take place.

What Are the Problems in Education?

The problems in education are what should be stressed. Are students deficient? What should be the nature and role of a Nebraska Policies Commission in addressing these problems is the real question. The difficulty that education has had in addressing its problems has been the lack of a comprehensive approach. Problems have been addressed through pressure exerted by special interest groups. This has led to an ad hoc approach to problems. An example of a problem that was addressed by a special interest group was the problem of the handicapped. This approach to the problems of education is necessitated by the lack of a comprehensive plan.

What Should Be the Composition of the Nebraska Policies Commission?

Ross Rasmussen felt that any policies commission should be dominated by legislators. He felt that legislators are the only people in the state who could adequately and accurately develop policy based on citizen input. A legislator has a constituency, and by the very nature of a legislator's role he is in close contact with the wants and needs of his constituency. Since this is the case, he posed a question as to whether a policies commission would be any more effective than the regular legislative channels. He felt that the legislature was an effective vehicle for forming consensus and drafting policy.

In response, Dale Hayes stated that he felt there was a need for policies to be formed outside of the normal channels. A commission would be able to devote more time and effort into the formulation of policy than the legislature and thus would be more effective. The legislature has too many other concerns which inhibit it from giving the proper attention to the formulation of education policy.

A policies commission could be an active, functioning body. The commission could undertake such projects as publishing materials and formulating positions on various educational issues. A discussion of this function of the commission raised such questions as to whether this was an effective method of attacking problems. The "Great Plains Study" was cited as a publication from a past commission which did not have much impact on legislative policy. Hayes disagreed with this statement and expressed the opinion that the "Great Plains Study" did indeed have impact on legislative policy.

Will a Policies Commission Be Listened to By Legislators?

Since legislators are concerned mainly with meeting the needs of the people in their districts, a policies commission would have to be organized on a district by district basis in order to be effective. It was also suggested that it would be difficult to gain a consensus on a statewide basis that legislators would listen to.

Summary

The need, nature of activities, funding, and composition of a Nebraska Education Policies Commission were discussed. A consensus was not gained in any of the topic areas discussed. A commission is needed in order to allow citizen input into the goal setting for the education of the state. The commission could serve as a forum in which consensus may be gained and thus policies later formulated through the political process. The funding for such a commission should be broad based with no one group having a dominant position. The composition of the commission should also be broad based, representing a cross section of the relevant public around the state.

Salient Questions/Comments

1. There are good reasons to assume that you need to measure what is going on in schools, but it is just a goofy idea if you are going to start to measure what is going on in schools unless you agree on what schools should do.

2. The schools ought to be doing what the people think, not what educators think they ought to be doing.

3. There aren't any teachers that wouldn't love to restrict their duties to the simple basic kinds of stuff.

4. The fact is that the art of administering anything is based on some kind of consensus that gives us the go ahead to do whatever we do and the identification of that consensus is almost impossible in a society that is completely split.

5. I think it is time that we introduce some mechanisms that will recreate some consensus.

6. Let's assume for a minute that people finally get together and decided that we are going to get tough in the grade schools. And we are going to get tough in the high schools. We are going to teach these kids to read. We then bump headlong into the court decisions that say you can't get tough with kids.

7. It seems like everyone agrees that it would be a great idea to have a policies commission. I am for the church, but I am going to argue with you on the location.

8. Most everyone is attempting to accommodate each of the special interest groups that in some way is working its programs into the budgets.

9. I don't think legislators on a whole will accept an outside group telling them what to do in the area of education unless they are a part of the group themselves.

10. I am troubled by the assumption that in a representative council there is going to be any more consensus than there is through the regular channels, through the State Board of Education, the legislature, and the local district.

CURRENT STATUS: THE NEED FOR A NEBRASKA EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

The possibility of an Education Policy Commission in Nebraska continues to be a topic of discussion. The legislature has created a Nebraska Education Council; however, it was created in association with the Compact on Education and is heavily weighted with legislators and state educators. The other task forces and commissions which have been created to deal with aspects of education in Nebraska are evidence of the fact that there is a need in the state for a more unified responsive educational system. A commission which focused upon statewide determination of education policy would assist in the achievement of these goals. At present there are many powerful forces which are attempting to exert their separate influence to shape the education policy in Nebraska. These groups include, but are not limited to, the legislature, the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the University system, the local school districts, taxpayers, and special interest groups. If these groups can begin to work together to achieve education goals in a spirit of cooperation rather than competition, Nebraska and education will both benefit.

The most serious objection raised to the creation of an Education Policy Commission is the absence of legislative mandate. A commission would presently have no real force, and therefore no real influence. This assertion is incorrect for three reasons. First, those groups which would necessarily combine to form the composition of the commission would supply support and influence for the commission. Secondly, the fact that the citizens of the state would be actively involved would give the commission a high degree of visibility; and accountability would be increased across the state. Finally, and perhaps most important, the commission would assume a statewide leadership role in this area and would not be confronted with the disagreement and bickering which now exists. A united front would

be presented for education which would be an advantage both publicly and in the legislature.

References: Nebraska Revised Statutes §79-2501-2502; Collegium IV and V; NES seminars, discussions, and reports; and selected interviews.

ANALYSIS/OBSERVATIONS: THE NEED FOR A NEBRASKA EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION

There appears to be no clear-cut definitive lines of authority as to the responsibility for the development of current education policy in Nebraska. Many forces have an effect on the development and evolvement of education policy at the local and state level. The federal government has an impact particularly through federal programs and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Title IX regulations are a specific example of the impact of the federal government. The state legislature certainly has an impact as exemplified by recent legislation concerning mandated special education programs, due process for students, access to records, and the extension of handicapped education to the pre-school age level. The State Department of Education has an impact through its accreditation and approval standards. Local citizens committees have an impact through their "watchdog" budget committee advisory groups. The professional staff has a definite impact through the avenue of negotiations and the grievance procedures adopted by many school systems. Administrators have an impact in that they have an opportunity to directly recommend school district policy changes and to communicate regularly with the board of education. The boards of education have an impact in that they still have some latitude in developing policies and rules and regulations to operate the schools.

The future development of education policy in Nebraska may swing more and more to the state legislature. It seems obvious to me that any severe limitation on local budgets will result in more and more programs being taken outside of the local budget and being administered directly by the State of Nebraska. Local pressure groups will swing their attention to the state government as it becomes apparent that local governing bodies cannot meet the expanded needs of the pressure groups.

It seems to me that it might very well be time to reassess the so-called local control issue. Perhaps we should be willing for the state to assume more and more of the policymaking function for education in Nebraska. Our Constitution does commit the state to the responsibility for providing a free and appropriate public education for its citizens. The decision-making at the local level has been narrowed and limited. Perhaps it is time for us to consider statewide salary schedules, statewide competency testing, and statewide curriculum development.

Local control of school districts in Nebraska is, in many respects, a myth at the present time. More than 90 percent of local budgets are determined by external forces. Boards of education have a very limited authority in their decisionmaking ability in regard to personnel, programs of activities, transportation, special education, discipline, and many other management areas. It is either time to move to a far more centralized state educational program or to identify and define the areas of education policy for which each layer of government in our state is responsible.

CONCLUSION

The Nebraska Education Seminar and vehicles similar to the Seminar can play a valuable interpretative and synthesizing role in monitoring, both on a local and state level, in Nebraska, the evolution of such issues as teacher negotiations, school finance, intergovernmental relations and accountability, and other key issues as they surface in the state. The NES approach to examining education policy issues can serve as a trigger to substantive studies of such issues as they emerge in Nebraska.

The development of sound education policy for Nebraska requires a critical mixing and intermingling of the thoughts and ultimately the actions of politicians, boards of education, and educators who are charged to carry out the work of the schools. The Nebraska Education Seminar program model offers a viable approach to bringing together key actors in the educational arena to deal in a direct manner with their joint concern--the development of education policy.

The Nebraska Education Seminar and its parent funding body, the Institute for Educational Leadership of the George Washington University, does not have a patent on the unique process it has pioneered; thus, interested Nebraskans should be encouraged to examine the NES model for possible implementation. The existence of myriad agencies responsible for education in the state could perhaps offer those concerned with the development of sound education policy avenues from which high quality seminars could be established at local and state levels. Improved mechanisms for input and decisionmaking in the education policy arena offer improved opportunities for the "filtering" of germane thinking as education policy is adopted which affects the education of Nebraska's citizens.